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LORD JOHN RUSSELL

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Lord John Russell
1825.
from an engraving by F. C. Lewis after a drawing by J. [illegible]

THE LIFE

OF

LORD JOHN RUSSELL

BY

SPENCER WALPOLE

AUTHOR OF 'A HISTORY OF ENGLAND FROM 1815'

With Two Portraits



IN TWO VOLUMES—VOL. I.

25730

LONDON

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PREFACE

MY DEAR LADY RUSSELL,

It is now more than two years and a half ago since you did me the honour of asking me whether I would undertake to write the life of Lord John Russell. In doing so you were good enough to promise that 'all private as well as public papers, letters, diaries, would be at [my] disposal.' You subsequently gave me an assurance that, in carrying out my work, I should be free from any conditions, and at liberty to deal with the subject in my own way, and in accordance with my own opinions.

In now handing to you these volumes, I desire gratefully to acknowledge the manner in which you have fulfilled your promise and acted on your assurance. You have not only placed at my disposal the private and official papers which are either in your own or in your brother's (Mr. George Elliot's) custody; but you have given me access to diaries and letters of a much more private nature, which have proved of the utmost value to me, but which neither I nor any one—except those who are nearest and dearest to you—could have hoped to have had opened to him.

I have still more gratefully to acknowledge that,

throughout my work, you have never attempted to influence me in my treatment of it. You at once acceded to my request that I should not show you what I had written till it was ready for publication. Under these circumstances, it is right that I should point out that the responsibility is with me alone; and that, if I have failed to draw an adequate portrait, the fault and the failure rest on my shoulders.

There are one or two points, in connection with my treatment of the subject, to which it is perhaps best that I should briefly refer.

1. As the materials which you placed at my disposal were laid before me I very soon came to the conclusion that I had two alternatives: (1) the publication of all the correspondence which had either a personal or an historic interest; (2) the selection of such portions of it as would adequately illustrate Lord John Russell's character and career. The first alternative would have involved a work extending over many volumes, which, however important to the historical student, would have been practically useless to the general reader. I consequently selected the second alternative, believing that it was rather the function of a biographer to write a book to be read, than to compile materials to be referred to.

2. In the selection of my materials I have endeavoured to choose those which were not necessarily the most important, but which bore most directly on Lord John's life and character; while as a general rule I have given a preference to documents that are new, and excluded documents already published in other works.

3. I can hardly expect that the principles on which I have thus acted will commend themselves to all my readers. An illustrious member of the Russell family, indeed, intimated to me at the commencement of my work that a life of Lord John Russell must be a history of England and of the Whig party during some fifty years. Any one who shares this opinion will meet with nothing but disappointment in these pages. From the beginning to the end of my book, I have endeavoured to recollect that I was not writing a history of England or of the Whig party, but a life of Lord John Russell: and I have been much more anxious to draw a portrait of the man, than to write an account of the time.

4. The title of a book is not perhaps a matter of great importance. But, as those whose judgment I value have told me that the life of a man who became a peer should bear his later and not his earlier name, I am glad to think that you, equally with myself, are of another opinion. The Fox Club, moreover, drinks at its meetings to the memory of Lord John Russell, not of Lord Russell; and it seems to me that it would be as illogical to call a life of Lord John Russell a life of Lord Russell, as it would be to call a life of Francis Bacon a life of Lord Verulam, or a life of Sir Robert Walpole a life of the Earl of Orford.

5. It only remains for me to add, that in discharging my task I have endeavoured to remember that it was my business to give Lord John Russell's opinions and not my own. I have, as far as possible, left the facts to speak for themselves. I have neither

tried to emphasise those passages of Lord John's career which make me respect and admire him, nor have I attempted to throw any false colour on the few incidents in it which I regret. Lord John himself placed on the title-page of one of his boyish diaries the words of Queen Catherine :—

> I wish no other herald,
> No other speaker of my living actions,
> To keep mine honour from corruption,
> But such an honest chronicler.

And it is in the spirit of this quotation that I have sought to compose this memoir.—Believe me, my dear Lady Russell, yours very sincerely,

S. WALPOLE.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, ISLE OF MAN.
September 1889.

I have dutifully and gratefully to acknowledge her Majesty's goodness, (1) in giving me access to three bound volumes of Lord John Russell's letters to her Majesty, and (2) in sanctioning the publication of (*a*) those of her letters which appear for the first time in this memoir, (*b*) the letters of King William IV.

I have also gratefully to acknowledge the great kindness of Sir Arthur Gordon, who has placed the whole of the privately printed correspondence of Lord Aberdeen at my disposal; of Lord Clarendon, who has given me access to his father's papers at The Grove; of Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, who, with Lord Lansdowne's consent, selected and forwarded to me the

correspondence of Lord Lansdowne with Lord John Russell and Lord Palmerston; of Sir A. H. Layard, who handed to me the whole of Lord Russell's letters to himself; of Mr. George Dalhousie Ramsay, who gave me access to Lord John's correspondence with Lord Panmure; of Mr. Redington, who selected for me some valuable documents from his father's, Sir T. Redington's, papers; of Professor Fraser, who made careful research for me in respect to Lord John's life at Edinburgh; of the Duke of Westminster, Lord Granville, Lord Moncrieff, Mr. Russell Barker, and many others, who have placed either information or material at my disposal.

I have also thankfully to acknowledge the assistance which I have received from the Duke of Bedford, who has supplied me with the (almost) complete set of Russell literature from the shelves of Woburn Abbey; from Lord Arthur Russell; from your brother, Mr. George Elliot, who has a unique knowledge of Lord John Russell's papers; from your nephew, Mr. Arthur Elliot, who handed me the whole of the 6th Duke[1] of Bedford's correspondence with Lady Minto; from Sir Henry Elliot, Mrs. Maurice Drummond,

[1] The Duke was for many years in the habit of writing almost daily to Lady Minto on political and other subjects. In one of these letters he writes, 'I have been much occupied during the whole of my illness both in Devonshire and here [Woburn] in destroying old letters. Clarendon says truly that no man has (or rather had) such an interesting number of political letters. It has been disappearing daily for some months. To some future publisher they would have been invaluable.' I insert the paragraph because suspicion may otherwise be felt that I have not availed myself of correspondence which unfortunately no longer exists. The Duke's letters to Lord John and Lady Minto, however, form important relics of it.

Mr. H. Villiers, and many others either related to or connected with your family.

So far as it was possible to do so I have endeavoured to obtain the distinct authority of the descendants of the men whose letters I have published. If I have, however, inadvertently omitted to make any such application, I trust that those whom I have failed to consult will accept my apology and excuse my neglect. In addition to those whose names have already been mentioned, my thanks are due on this account to the Dukes of Argyll, Devonshire, Wellington, and Westminster; to Lords Normanby, Bessborough, Cowley, Cowper, Derby, Durham, Fortescue, Grey, Northbrook, Pembroke, Selborne, Spencer, Strafford, Halifax, Brougham, and Rowton; to the Dowager Lady Lilford; to the Speaker of the House of Commons; to Mr. Gladstone, Mr. C. P. Villiers, Sir George Trevelyan, Mr. Evelyn Ashley; Sir Edward Grey, Sir R. Owen, Major Graham, Mr. Daniel O'Connell, Mrs. Trotter, Miss Hogarth, and others, for sanctioning the publication of letters.

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LIFE

OF

LORD JOHN RUSSELL

CHAPTER I.

EARLY YEARS.

Woburn, August 18, 1803.—This is my birthday. I am eleven years old, 4 feet 2 inches high, and 3 stone 12 lbs. weight. The Duchess gave me a Shakespeare. It is a very hot day. Mr. Thornton and Mr. Higgins came here to-day; there was a ball in the evening.

The little boy who made this, the first, entry in his first journal was destined to lead the House of Commons for a longer period than any of Mr. Pitt's successors, and to become twice Prime Minister of England.

It is the common practice of biographers to anticipate the story of their hero's life by tracing the achievements of his immediate ancestors; and this custom, which is perhaps justified by the increased attention which thoughtful men are paying to the modern doctrine of heredity, may at first sight seem peculiarly applicable to the present memoir: for, if the qualities of a man be really derived from his forefathers, the eminence of Lord John Russell may be traced to circumstances antecedent to his birth. It is at least a striking circumstance that the statesman, who throughout his life was the uncompromising champion of civil and religious liberty, should have been the descendant of men one of whom was sacrificed by autocracy on the scaffold, and another of whom is described, on the high authority of Mr. Lecky, as 'the first Lord-Lieutenant [of Ireland] who showed himself unequivocally in favour of a relaxation of the penal code.'

Yet, if an introduction of this kind may be defended at first sight as appropriate, it may be rejected, on second thoughts, as unnecessary. It would be superfluous to cumber a work which is intended to be concise with information easily accessible elsewhere. The fame of the Russell who drained the Bedford Level, and of the Russell who perished on the scaffold, is part of the history of the seventeenth century. One at least of the Russells, who succeeded to the honours of the family in the eighteenth century, is not likely to be forgotten: for the letters of Junius preserve, if they distort, the character of the fourth Duke of Bedford, who, from the fall of Walpole to the rise of Rockingham, exercised a commanding influence on English politics.

The fourth Duke of Bedford died in 1771. Four years before that date his eldest son, Lord Tavistock, had been thrown from his horse and killed. By his wife, a daughter of the second Lord Albemarle, Lord Tavistock had three sons. The eldest, Francis, fifth Duke of Bedford, born in 1765, succeeded to the dukedom in 1771, and died unmarried in 1802. The second, John, born in 1766, became sixth Duke on his brother's death. The third, William, a posthumous child, was murdered by his valet, Courvoisier, in 1840.

John, the second son, who succeeded unexpectedly to the dukedom in 1802, married in 1786 Georgiana, a daughter of the fourth Lord Torrington. This lady presented him with three sons: Francis, who will appear in these pages as Lord Tavistock, and seventh Duke of Bedford, born in 1788; George William, commonly known as Lord William Russell, born in 1790, the father of the present Duke of Bedford, of Lord Arthur Russell, and of the late Lord Ampthill; and John, the subject of this memoir.

After her youngest son's birth, Lady John Russell suffered from confirmed ill-health. In a letter, which is undated, but which was probably written in 1796, she says to her sister, Lady Weymouth—

> Ill-health, like every other misfortune, brings with it the consolations which enable us to support it. To you I appear more to be pitied than I really am; and I am sensible that I have acquired a melancholy way of expressing myself, for which I am very blamable.

Indeed, my Isabella, I ought to be happy, and if I am only resigned it is a fault. I deserve no pity. I am surrounded with advantages of every sort. If there is a character on earth who deserves the reverence of mankind, it is the man to whom I am united. His principles are superior to those of every person whom I ever met with, and if I was but half as good as him, I should deserve all that your partial friendship says of me. Heaven grant him a long life, for certain I am that it will grow every day more useful to his fellow citizens. Not so with mine, sweet Isabella; it is unfortunately bowed down—bent like the willow never to rise again; but at least, whilst it lasts, I have the comfort of knowing, from the calmness that I inwardly experience, that, however unworthily I may have passed my useless life, the not having done any wicked action leaves to the mind

> What nothing earthly gives or can destroy,
> The soul's calm sunshine.

Lady John Russell unfortunately transmitted the ill-health from which she suffered to her youngest son, who was born in Hertford Street in 1792. But perhaps this very circumstance made him her favourite child. She certainly won his love. In his old age, in 1871, he said—

I was very fond of her. I used to call her in the morning, and from that hour during the whole of the day she showed me the utmost affection. I used to delight in reading to her 'Plutarch's Lives' in the morning.[1]

To complete the picture of his early life, it may be well to quote the conclusion of the sentence:—

In the middle of the day I worked at a little garden, following the directions which my father gave me in a little almanack, partly in print and partly written by him for me. The place I remember where I passed my early childhood was Stratton Park[2] in Hampshire, where Lord and Lady Russell passed many happy years; but when I was about eight years old Stratton was sold by my uncle Francis, Duke of Bedford, and Oakley in Bedfordshire was lent to my father instead. I never liked Oakley so well.

But greater changes were in store for him than the removal from Stratton to Oakley. He was sent to what he

[1] This and the succeeding quotations are taken from a memorandum dictated by him to Lady Russell in 1871.

[2] Stratton is now the property of Lord Northbrook.

himself called 'a very bad private school at Sunbury.'[1] There he received the only letter from his mother which is preserved. It is written on a little sheet of note paper, with a blue pattern on the border; and the envelope, which matches the paper, is addressed 'To the best of all good little boys, J. R.' It is as follows:—

I thank you, my dearest, for your dear little letter. I am glad you like school, and I hope you will try to learn, as nothing but the necessity of learning could make us part with such a dear good little boy. Therefore, my love, pray study, give your whole attention to your different lessons, and we shall once more be happy together. I miss your dear voice when I wake, and I regret you every moment of the day. Soon I hope to see you, and to hear a very good account of you from Dr. Moore and Mrs. Moore, to whom I beg you will give my compliments. God bless you, my love. Your papa says you was very good on the road, and very pleasant. Give my love to dear William.

It was at this school that his brother William and he 'were suddenly afflicted' by the news of their mother's death on October 11, 1801.

A mother's loss leaves a lasting impression even on the mind of a little child of nine. But perhaps his uncle's death, in the following spring, and the change of life which it entailed on the family, may have served partially to distract the thoughts both of the widower and his children. Thenceforward their father was Duke of Bedford, and owner of the vast possessions which had accrued to the Russells by grants, marriages, and purchases; and his sons, instead of passing their holidays at Oakley, came home either to Woburn or London.

In the year which followed his accession to the title, and

[1] I have found on the last page of an old MS. book a list of the boys at Dr. Moore's school, Sunbury, April 1, 1800. The list includes the names of Lord John's two eldest brothers, but not his own, and was presumably written in the book by one of his brothers immediately before Lord John was sent to Sunbury. The list is a long one, and many names in it, FitzRoy, Seymour, Bridgeman, Acland, Mildmay, Stanhope, Churchill, &c., prove that the school was a fashionable one. In 1836 one of the ushers at this school wrote to Lord John for pecuniary help. His private secretary suggested a civil refusal, but Lord John endorsed the letter, 'I will send a draft.'

in the second year of his widowhood, the Duke married a second time. The new wife—another Georgiana—was a daughter of the fourth Duke of Gordon. In due time she presented her husband with a very large family of seven sons and three daughters. It is more to the purpose of this memoir that she proved an affectionate stepmother to her husband's children.

About two months after his father's second marriage Lord John began the journal, the first entry in which has been inserted at the commencement of this chapter.

The following extracts are also taken from it. Each extract is a complete entry for the date to which it refers.

Woburn, Monday, August 29, 1803.—I went out hunting to-day for the first time in my life, with Tavistock's harriers. We set off at four o'clock in the morning, and went to a little wood (of which I don't know the name), where we were joined by Mr. Moore. We found nothing there. We looked about the most likely places. Mr. and Lady Fanny Ponsonby, Mr. and Mrs. Whitbread, Mr. Bennet, Mr. Gilpin, Mr. Gunning, the Duke of Manchester, Mr. Atkin, and Mr. Peirce, an Etonian, all came here to-day from Southill, except the Duke of Manchester. A very hot day. We went to Crawley—Moore too—where we at length found a hare, but soon lost it in consequence of the bad scent.[1]

. . . . . .

Woburn, Saturday, September 10.—Hot. I went out shooting to-day with Tavistock, Lord Preston, and William. There were also Bowdler, Brookes, and Will, who carried bread and cheese. One time, when the dogs pointed, they got off. Bowdler went to take hold of Lord Preston's mare, which was just before me, who was getting off my pony. The mare happened to have the bridle upon her leg and went upon me, who fell down and got under her belly. She trod upon me, but I soon got up, cried, and ran to Lord Preston, who took me in his arms and told Bowdler to go to the alehouse and get some vinegar and brandy. In short, I was not much hurt, and got on my pony directly. They killed eight brace and a half of partridges and a landrail. Mr. Morris went to-day.

. . . . . .

London, Thursday, September 22.—Rather hot, but not much

[1] Southill is Mr. Whitbread's seat in Berkshire. Lady Fanny should, I presume, be Lady Mary Ponsonby. The wife of the Mr. Ponsonby who afterwards led the opposition was a Lady Mary Butler.

sun. I, William, and Tavistock came here in a post-chaise. It is forty-two miles, and we came in five hours. Herbert rode post. We went to Drury Lane in the evening to see "Lovers' Vows," and "The Children in the Wood." Mrs. H. Johnston made her first appearance in the character of Miss Wieldhaim [*sic*]. Herbert went with us.[1]

Westminster, Friday, September 23.—Coldish. We came here. Henry Lambert is come here. The boys play at hoops, peg-tops, and pea-shooters. I went to Geary's.

. . . . . .

Westminster, Sunday, October 2.—Rather cold. I shall now I have leisure put some of the rules of the school. We go into school every morning at eight. The Sixth, Shell, Second, and Petty come out to breakfast at nine and stay till ten. The Fifth, Fourth, and Two-thirds come out at ten and stay till eleven. On Tuesdays school is up at eleven, on other days at twelve; on whole school-days we go in again at two and come out at five. Monday is a whole school-day, Tuesday a play, Wednesday a whole school-day, Thursday a half-holiday; Friday is a whole school-day, and Saturday is a half-holiday. On an early play, school is up at nine; on a late one, half-past eleven, and the upper school have all their exercises excused them, the under school half of them. All the fellows have verses on Thursdays and Saturdays. We go on a Sunday to church in the morning in Henry the Seventh's Chapel, and in the evening have prayers in the school. Carey is head-master, and hears the Sixth; Old Smedley the Shell, Dodd the Fifth, Ward the Fourth, and Page,[2] the under-master, the Upper Third; Smith the Under-Third, young Smedley the Second, and Connebeer [*sic*] the First and Petty. . . . There are four boarding-houses, Grant's, Clapham's, Glover's, and Smedley's. I board at Grant's, and am in the upper part of the Under Third.

. . . . . .

Westminster, Monday, October 10.—Cold. I was flogged for the first time to-day.

. . . . . .

[1] Herbert was an old confidential servant, and is frequently alluded to in the early diaries. Mrs. Johnston played the part of Amelia, daughter of Baron Wilderhaim.

[2] Carey became Bishop of Exeter in 1820, and was translated to St. Asaph in 1830. Smedley seems to have been usually known as 'old' Smedley. Lord Albemarle, who went to Westminster some years after his cousin Lord John Russell, uses the same epithet in enumerating the masters of his time in two doggerel Latin lines:—

> Carey, vetus Smedley, Jemmy Dodd, simul et Johnny Campbell,
> Knox, Ellis, Longlands, Pageque furore gravis.

London, Tuesday, October 25.—Not so cold—rather misty. To-day is a holiday, and my father came to town yesterday, so we are come out to him. I went to the play with my father, the Duchess, Tavistock, and William to see 'The Duenna' and 'The Camp' at Drury Lane. King's accession.

Westminster, Wednesday, October 26.—Ditto [*i.e.* not so cold]. The fellows expected a play to-day, but Carey would not give it. At twelve o'clock the fellows hissed, and Carey called them back and flogged every tenth fellow of the Fifth, and did not do anything to the Sixth, although they began it. The Sixth, when they came in at two, hissed again. He asked who it was that hissed. Tavistock said it was him, and he flogged him.

London, Thursday, October 27.—I came home again to-day, as to-morrow is a whole holiday. I went to Covent Garden to see 'The Gamester' and 'The Review.' Kemble, Cooke, and Mrs. Siddons acted Beverley, Stukeley, and Mrs. Beverley. The weather was the same.

Westminster, Saturday, November 5.—Cold. A holiday for the gunpowder plot. The fellows went out Guy Fawksing, which is, they all get clubs and go to everybody whom they hear have got 'guys' to take them from them if they can. I went. In the evening there was a bonfire and fireworks, a great deal of squibbing, and so great a crowd and smoke that I soon came away. The Bow Street officers came afterwards to put it out. Ward gave a lecture about it at names, in which he said that we were the example to all the rascals and scoundrels in the kingdom.

. . . . . .

London, Saturday, November 12.—Rainy. A play. My father and the Duchess and Herbert are come to town. I go out. I went to Drury Lane to see 'The Merry Wives of Windsor,' in which Palmer acted Falstaff, and the new thing called 'The Caravan of the Driver and his Dog,' where there is real water, and a dog jumps in and saves a child. Bannister acts the Driver. By the bye, I quite forgot to mention that we acted 'Tom Thumb' at Westminster. Tavistock acted the King and I Tom Thumb. Brent made the epilogue and prologue. I ought to have put the prologue first. Peyton spoke the prologue, and Tavistock, Brent, Cator, and myself the epilogue. . . . The Parliament also met on that day, and I went out on the Thursday and went to Covent Garden to see 'Venice Preserved' and 'Raising the Wind.' I quite forgot to put all this at the time.

. . . . . .

Westminster and London, Monday, December 12.—I came this

morning to Westminster, but went back again at night. I have broke up for the holidays. How jolly! I went to the play again to-night at Covent Garden to see 'Macbeth' and 'Raising the Wind.' Kemble and Mrs. Siddons were Lord and Lady Macbeth. . . .

London, Tuesday, December 13.—To-day is the College play and breaking-up day at Westminster.

London, Wednesday, December 14.—Cold, wet. I went to the play to-night to see at Drury Lane 'Deaf and Dumb' and 'The Driver and his Dog.' Julio, Miss de Camp.[1]

London, Thursday, December 15.—Cold and wet. I went to Covent Garden to see 'The English Fleet' and 'The Intriguing Chambermaid.' . . .

London, Friday, December 16.—Cold and wet. I went to the play again to-night at Drury Lane to see 'The Castle Spectre.' The farce was 'The Caravan,' but as I had seen it twice before I did not stop to see it.

London, Saturday, December 17.—Cold and wet. I went to Covent Garden to see 'The English Fleet' and 'The Birthday.'

London, Sunday, December 18.—I took a black dose this morning so I did not go out. Wet.

London, Monday, December 19.—Wet. I went to Drury Lane to see 'Othello.' Othello, Mr. Pope; Iago, Mr. Barrymore; Desdemona, Mrs. Young. And 'The Caravan.'

Woburn, Tuesday, December 20.—I am at last come to Woburn again, having been away three months and three days. Lord Ludlow is here, who was Lord Preston. Wet still.

These few extracts from the boy's diary at school, and the record of the remarkable manner in which he spent the first week of his holidays, bring down the picture of his life to the close of 1803. Mr. Disraeli said of himself that he was born in a library; and the reader of Lord John Russell's early diaries is tempted to think that Lord John was nurtured in a playhouse.

From September 23 to December 12 not a single day passes in which some short entry is not made in the diary. But throughout the period no word of complaint is inserted in it. The brave delicate little boy took the rough life of Westminster, as he took his first flogging, as matters of course. It is true that he had the advantage of his elder brother's

[1] Miss de Camp played the part of Rosa; Julio, the boy who is saved by the dog, was played by Master West.

presence at school. But even elder brothers are occasionally hard taskmasters. More than thirty years afterwards, when Lord John had become one of the first men in England, Lord Tavistock wrote to him—

I shall be delighted to be godfather to your child, or to do anything else to show my affection and attachment to you. I often think, with great reproach to myself, of my harsh treatment to you at Westminster, in fagging you, when you were a very little boy and out of health, to do work which I ought to have done myself, and often taking you to task for not doing it as I wished (probably most unreasonably). But fagging is too apt to make boys tyrants and brutes, although it may be a good thing on the whole. However, thank God, you are not the worse for it now, and if you had been any other boy's fag (which you must have been if you had not been mine) he might have treated you even less well. Still, I feel it to be the greatest sin I have to answer for.

More than thirty years later still, Lord John himself said in the memorandum which he dictated to Lady Russell—

Talleyrand said, with his usual point, 'La meilleure éducation du monde est celle des "public schools" en Angleterre, et celle-là est détestable.' There is in public schools a spirit which partakes much of the nature of a democratic republic. A boy must always be ready to fight any other boy of his own size and strength.[1] He must never betray to the masters any faults or misdeeds of his fellows. He must show a gallant bearing on every occasion. Truth and courage, and the equality of boy with boy are encouraged by this species of life. It is a life totally separate from the discipline of the masters, who confine their attention to the Latin and Greek which they are engaged to teach. At Westminster School physical hardihood was always encouraged. If two boys were engaged to fight during the time of school, those boys who wanted to see the fight could always get permission to leave school for this purpose. Westminster School was a rough place. Being placed in the under school, I at once became a fag, and, as such, was directed by some of the boys of Grant's boarding-house to desire the glazier to mend a window which was broken. Two days afterwards, as the glazier had not appeared,

[1] Lord John's chief friend at Westminster was a boy named H . . . He grew up to be killed in a duel—'not an unlikely end for him'—so wrote Lord Tavistock in March 1835: a sentence which probably illustrates his character at school.

the same boys asked me whether I had given him the order. When I said 'Yes,' they rejoined, 'Did you swear at him?' I said 'No.' 'Then go and swear at him.' For a little boy this was not a very good lesson. The teaching in the under school consisted entirely of Latin—Latin grammar, Latin verses, and translation of extracts from the New Testament into Latin. We were not taught writing or arithmetic, and we used to go on the half-holidays to a writing master in Great Dean's Yard to learn these necessary arts. I remember employing one of the hours intended for this purpose in going to Tothill Fields to see a fight between Young Belcher and another famous pugilist. The beginning of the fight was a beautiful exhibition of manly form and skill; but, when the blood began to flow, I grew disgusted and left the scene. So little, however, had I learned of arithmetic, that when my father gave me two sums to add together, one of which contained a farthing and the other a halfpenny, I was obliged to ask him what those odd signs meant.

Writing, however, in 1822 on English Government, Lord John expressed a more favourable and perhaps truer opinion on the value of public schools:—

A public school does form the character. It takes a boy from home, where he is a darling, where his folly is wit, and his obstinacy spirit, to a place where he takes rank according to his real power and talents. . . . This is of much more importance than the acquisition of mere knowledge.

Happily for him—

The hard life of a fag—for in those days it was a hard life—and the unwholesome food disagreed with me so much that [in the summer of 1804 [1]] my stepmother, the Duchess of Bedford, insisted with my father that I should be taken away and sent to a private tutor. . . . For some months I received lessons at Woburn Abbey from Dr. Cartwright, the brother of Major Cartwright, the famous reformer. From Dr. Cartwright [at that time domestic chaplain to the Duke of Bedford], who was a man of much learning and great mechanical ingenuity, I acquired a taste for Latin poetry which has never left me.

Lord John Russell goes on to say that Dr. Cartwright in-

[1] Mr. Russell Barker, a gentleman who has carefully studied the Westminster papers, has been good enough to ascertain for me that Lord John left Westminster at Bartholomewtide 1804. He was at Westminster, therefore, not quite a year.

vented a machine for carding wool, and a model of a boat which was moved by clock-work and acted on the water by a paddle underneath. Oddly enough, he omits to add that Dr. Cartwright was the inventor of the power loom, a machine which gradually effected a complete revolution in manufacturing England, and whose introduction, by destroying hand-loom weaving, was attended with social changes of unexampled importance. But Dr. Cartwright was not merely a mechanic. He was a poet of some note in his day; and published in 1807 a volume of letters and sonnets on moral and other interesting subjects addressed to Lord John Russel (*sic*). In his preface to this collection, Dr. Cartwright says that—

> The writer's chief aim was merely to divert and amuse his *very* young friend by dwelling on such subjects only as were calculated for the meridian of a child's understanding. But he soon perceived that the mental digestion of his infantine correspondent was competent to more solid and nutritious aliment than anything he had yet supplied him with.

Or to quote his opening letter :—

> The playful style in which we have hitherto corresponded would but ill accord with that gravity of character which, in our present stage of life, it is now incumbent upon us to assume. I, my Lord, have completed my grand climacterical year, and your Lordship is actually entered into your teens. Let us then lay aside our quips and our quiddities, and start some serious subject of correspondence.

Dr. Cartwright's example probably stimulated his young pupil to prosecute pursuits for which he had already developed an inclination. About this time, if handwriting may be accepted as a guide, Lord John commenced the composition of a drama, never destined to be completed, in which Alonzo, the 'right king' of Spain, is living in exile, and earning his bread as a fisherman, while Diego, a usurper, occupies his throne. Soon afterwards he began compiling a scrap medley, or common-place book, in which he entered any epigram or anecdote that struck his fancy; and from 1805 his writings really assume considerable proportions.

His first volume of poetry, if it may be so called, is a little manuscript book, entitled—

THE WORKS
OF
JOHN RUSSELL, LL.D., A.S.S., ETC.
THE WHOLE COLLECTED AND COMPILED
BY HIMSELF.
Volume I.

Let pity to his youthful errors bend,
Forgive at least, but, if you can, commend.'
Prologue to 'Love in Several Masques,' by H. Fielding.[1]

On the back of the title-page is a short dedication to the Right Hon. William Pitt, Chancellor of the Exchequer, &c., which concludes—

This little volume, being graced with your name, will prosper; without it my labour would be all in vain. May you remain at the helm of state long enough to bestow a pension on your very humble and obedient servant, JOHN RUSSELL.[2]

The volume opens with a farce which the author entitles 'Perseverance, or All in All.' It is, of course, too long to quote here; but it is characteristic that the author's earliest production is not only a play, but that one of the chief incidents of the play is laid in a playhouse. Lord John was apparently of opinion that, if a lover in London could not discover his mistress elsewhere, he was tolerably certain to find her at a theatre. The rest of the volume is made up of epigrams and shorter poems, some of which will be quoted later on.

[1] Fielding's line is 'Let pity to his *lighter* errors bend.' But Lord John either did not verify his quotation or purposely modified it. The 'fun' of the letters which Lord John appends to his name hardly needs to be pointed out.

[2] Lord John, throughout his life, had the worst opinion of Mr. Pitt's policy. Writing to Lord Melbourne on Dec. 12, 1838, he said, 'I agree with Tavistock in laying upon Pitt the fault of the Corn Laws, and every other difficulty we have or shall have. His measures were (1) 500 millions of debt; (2) a bad currency; (3) bad poor laws; (4) a bad law for Canada; (5) swamping the House of Lords. And his faults of omission [? were] about equal to those of commission. So that it is difficult to find any political evil which is not to be traced to Pitt. However, one has the satisfaction of thinking that a country which has survived being governed by Pitt must last for ever.

These poems were chiefly written after their author had passed out of Dr. Cartwright's charge. In February 1805 he entered on a new phase of his singular education. He was sent to the house of Mr. Smith, the vicar of Woodnesboro', near Sandwich—'a very worthy man,' to quote Lord John's own account of him, 'well acquainted with classical authors, both Greek and Latin, but without any remarkable qualities either of character or understanding.' At Woodnesboro', which Lord John did not finally leave till the autumn of 1808, he became well acquainted with the Duke of Devonshire (then Lord Hartington), the Duke of Leinster, his brother Lord William Fitzgerald, Lord Clare, his brother Richard Fitzgibbon, and his cousin Richard Butler, afterwards Lord Cahir, who, as well as Lord Tavistock and Lord William Russell, were Mr. Smith's pupils during this time. With Lord Clare, Lord John formed so warm a friendship that Lord Byron, who had been Lord Clare's friend at Harrow, expressed violent jealousy at the regret which Lord Clare felt when Lord John left England for Spain.[1] In addition to the boys, Mr. Smith's or Dean Smigo's family—for the boys called their tutor Dean Smigo—comprised his wife and three daughters, whose birthdays are duly recorded inside the cover of the new diary which Lord John commenced on his arrival at Woodnesboro'. Perhaps these ladies' personal qualifications may be gathered from a phrase in one of his letters. 'To-morrow,' he wrote in 1807 after a short absence, 'I shall again enjoy the satisfaction of seeing their sweet, delightful, pleasant, handsome, agreeable, pretty, entertaining, good-humoured, fat faces.'

The discipline at Woodnesboro' does not seem to have been very strict. The elder boys rambled about the country with guns; the younger boys either accompanied them or walked to Sandwich, so usual a walk that Lord John wrote in his diary—

I shall always put down when I do not go to Sandwich; so I go always but when I put down I do not go or when I go a-shooting [i.e. accompanying other boys shooting].

[1] *Moore's Memoirs*, vol. vi. p. 36, and Lady Russell's Memorandum Book.

For games, the boys played cricket in the daytime, and loo and 'speculation' in the evening, either with Dean Smigo and his family, or with the neighbours. On other days they made excursions to Deal, Ramsgate, Dover, or Canterbury, taking post-chaises for their expeditions, and feeing the post-boys and dining at hotels like young gentlemen with whom money was no object. In April 1805, for instance, this boy of twelve gave 14*s.* for a dinner at Canterbury, and 2*s.* 8*d.* for a dinner on the following evening at Waldershare. Occasionally some strolling players came to Sandwich; when Lord John's accounts show that he was an almost invariable attendant in the pit, while his diary almost as invariably records his opinion of the performance.

One other feature of the Woodnesboro' life deserves to be mentioned. Hardly a day passed in which the boys did not lose or win some bet either with their tutor or with one another. Here are Lord John's accounts for the last ten days of March 1805:—

	s.	*d.*
21. Won of Tavistock . .	1	6
23. Wager with Mr. Smith	1	0
24. Wager with Tavistock.		6
26. Bet with Tavistock .	2	6
30. Another with Tavistock		6

	s.	*d.*
21. Bet with Mr. Smith .		6
24. Letter		7
28. Bet with Mr. Smith .		6
Oranges and biscuits .		9
Two letters	1	8
Wager with Mr. Smith		6
29. Lost at cards . . .	8	0
30. Barley-sugar drops. .		7
Biscuits		6
Lost at 'speculation' .	1	6
Bet with Mr. Smith .		6

It may be added that in the spring of 1806 Lord John took a 1*l.* ticket in the lottery, and in June he drew the sixteenth part of a 100*l.* prize.[1]

Such was the course of Lord John's life during his first few months' stay at Woodnesboro'. At that time the attention of older persons was directed to the charges against Lord Melville; and Lord John made the attack on the statesman the subject of his first political satire. Thus it began:—

[1] It was an ordinary thing to take what was known as a sixteenth in the lottery.

NUMBER ONE.

When Harry Dundas was as little as me—
That is, years he had lived to the number of three—
His mother once gave him a nice little book,
And, whilst from her hands he it joyfully took,
She spoke to him thus : 'Remember, dear son,
That you always take care of good Number One.'

Chorus.

Come hither and listen, ye young and ye old,
Come listen to what is about to be told.
Come Barbers and Taylors, all sorts and all kinds ;
For Scotchmen have got it impressed on their minds,
In whatever is said, in whatever is done,
Mind you always take care of good Number One.

And so on, through another dozen stanzas, till at last :—

Billy Pitt tried all means he could for his friend,
But all he could do the case could not mend.
Lord Melville now lost all before he had won,
And there was an end of poor Number One.

Lord John stayed at Woodnesboro' from February till August 1805. Perhaps from the anxiety which his delicacy caused,[1] he did not return to his tutor's at the end of the usual holidays, but remained at Woburn till the following January. Life in Bedfordshire did not afford many incidents for history to record ; and, from Lord John's point of view, the most important of them was a visit which he paid to Kimbolton, and some private theatricals in which he himself took part at the Abbey. The visit to Kimbolton was in honour of Lady Madalina Sinclair's[2] marriage with Mr. Palmer of Luckley —an event which suggested a new poem to this little boy of thirteen.

. . .
Hail, couple worthy of a poet's lay !
Hail, blessed era ! hail, O joyful day !
. . . . . .

[1] Lord John writes on his thirteenth birthday, 'I am 4 feet 5¼ inches high, and I weigh 4 stone 7 lbs. 14 oz.' Two years had barely added 3½ inches to his stature, and 10 lbs. to his weight.

[2] Lady Madalina was the second, and the Duchess of Manchester the third daughter of the fourth Duke of Gordon. They were therefore sisters to the Duchess of Bedford. Lady Madalina's first husband was Sir Robert Sinclair of Stevenson.

But hear the envious cry of plodding cits :
'Why, surely Palmer must have lost his wits.'
'She brought him nothing,' hark, another cries.—
The happy bridegroom with contempt replies,
'This subject with far different eyes I see,
What's nought to you a treasure proves to me,
More than the brightest jewel of the earth
Or all the gold to which Peru gives birth,
Richer than all the hoarding miser's pelf :
All this she brought me, for she brought herself.'

While at Kimbolton, Lord John received the first letter from his father which has been preserved. In it the Duke says—

I enclose you 5*l.*, the greater part of which you will probably have occasion for before you leave Kimbolton. You will give a guinea to the man who takes care of your pony ; half a guinea to the person who cleans your clothes ; and five shillings to the housemaid ; and pay your washing bills.

The Duke's instructions were faithfully carried out. In the account book a few days later is the following entry :—

	£	s.	d.
To the man who took care of my pony . .	1	1	0
To the boy who cleaned my clothes . . .		10	6
To the housemaid		5	0
Washing bills		10	6
Chaise, turnpikes and postboy	1	11	0

A fortnight before the marriage, the party at Woburn got up some private theatricals, playing 'The Mayor of Garratt' and 'The Village Lawyer,' first to the company and the servants, and second to the neighbourhood. Lord John played Roger in 'The Mayor of Garratt,' and took part in the epilogue, a dialogue between a county manager (Mr. Cartwright) and a London actor (Lord J. Russell). The play was successful ; and on December 31, 1805, and on January 2, 4, 7, 1806, it was followed by new performances of 'The Mayor of Garratt,' preceded by 'John Bull.' Still later, on January 10 and 11, the company gave 'The Rivals,' in which Lord John played the minor part of Lucy ; and, in setting out the dramatis personæ

in his diary, Lord John records his opinion that 'The Rivals' was the best acted on the whole.

It is remarkable that Lord John—a boy of thirteen—both wrote and spoke the prologue to these performances. It is preserved in 'The Works of John Russell' as 'Prologue to "John Bull," spoken by Lord J. Russell in the character of a fox hunter;' and as, in his scrap medley, Lord John has also preserved an epilogue written by Mr. Whitbread, and spoken by himself in the same character, it may be inferred that he spoke the epilogue also.

These theatricals were probably, in Lord John's opinion, the greatest, as they were also the last, incident in his long holiday. Six days afterwards he left Woburn, and, after staying four nights in London, on three of which—the fourth was a Sunday—he went to the theatre, he returned to Woodnesboro'. The month in which he returned was a memorable one in English history. Two days after Lord John reached his tutor's Mr. Pitt died; and Lord Hawkesbury, it was reported, had some chance of becoming Prime Minister. The rumour inspired Lord John with a parody of the famous dagger scene in 'Macbeth.' He made Lord Hawkesbury say—

> Is this a place I see before me?
> The offer tow'rds my hand. Come, let me clutch thee.
> I have thee not, and yet, I see thee still.
> Art thou not, charming vision, sensible
> To feeling as to sight, or art thou but
> A place in my mind's eye of false creation,
> Proceeding from my anxious hopes and wishes?
> I see thee yet in gold more palpable
> Than this which now I hold, &c.

Lord Hawkesbury, however, refused the offer; the Talents Administration was formed; and the Whig tutor gave his Whig pupils a whole holiday to celebrate the return of the Whigs to power.

Saturday, February 8.—We did no business [1] on Mr. Fox's coming into the Ministry. I shot a couple of larks beyond Southerden.

In the new Administration Lord H. Petty, who afterwards,

[1] Lord John's usual expression for a whole holiday.

as Lord Lansdowne, was Lord John's close friend and colleague, began his career as Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the name suggested to Lord John his first epigram:—

> In vain for strength and energy we seek,
> All our hopes are effeminate and weak.
> Look to the stage—the ruler there is Betty;[1]
> The Chancellor of the Exchequer is but Petty.

The fall of the Tories, however, suggested to the future Prime Minister a much more ambitious poem. In his later days he wrote of it as 'a very bad satire directed against the leaders of the Opposition.' Here are a few extracts from it:

> Once on a time, by fate or fortune led,
> In Downing's well-known Street I chanced to tread.
> I saw a mob beset the Treasury gate.
> 'What's this?' I cried, 'what new parade of State?'
> Some one replied, 'A sorry one no doubt,
> The quondam Ministers will soon come out.
> Good and great men, they gave my eldest brother
> A sinecure, and promised me another.'

Mr. Pitt's colleagues pass one after another through the Street.

> The gentle rabble sighed in sympathy.
> Of grief for Pitt there not a single trace is.
> These mourn their lost, and those their promised, places.

Consequent upon the change of Ministry, the Duke of Bedford was made Viceroy of Ireland.

Wednesday, March 12.—T[avistock] and I set off after dinner to take leave of my father before he went to Ireland.

The boys reached London after being very nearly snowed up at Sittingbourne on the following evening; stayed there eight nights, on five of which Lord John went to the theatre; and, after bidding their father good-bye, returned to Woodnesboro', where Lord John remained till the following June.

During these months, the boy was gradually acquiring fresh pursuits.

[1] In 1806 the child-actor, Master Betty, was drawing crowded houses to Covent Garden.

Woodnesboro', Saturday, February 1, 1806.—I went out shooting for the first time with Mr. Smith's gun. I got eight shots at little birds, and killed four of them.

Sunday, March 2.—I rode William's pony for the first time about the fields. He carried me very well.

Saturday, April 5.—I rode with Tavistock about here. He made me leap some places I was afraid of.

Thenceforward the boy's expeditions were longer, and his knowledge of the country and his confidence on horseback grew.

Ponies, however, were not the only live-stock at Woodnesboro'. Lord Hartington in 1805 brought to his tutor's his dog 'Chance.' In 1806 Lord John kept at the vicarage another dog, 'Mrs. Witty.' It was characteristic of the boy that the first thing he did on obtaining his new pet was to write what he knew of her history :—

THE HISTORY OF MRS. WITTY.

This renowned heroine was born in the summer of 1803. Her father's name was Jehasabaz, belonging to Major Fuller of the 10th Light Dragoons, but in reality an independent regimental dog. Her mother was a little black poodle of whom we have been able to trace no documents from an authentic source. At her coming into the world, together with her brother and sisters, there are no accounts of the heavens appearing otherwise than they did on any other day. They were all given by the above-mentioned Major directly to his groom, who sold the subject of the present memoir to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales's hussar for the sum of half a guinea, and it is chiefly owing to his instruction and care that she is such an accomplished lady.

The first mention of 'Mrs. Witty' is in the accounts for September 1805 :—

	s.	*d.*
September 12.—Basket for Witty . . .	10	0

But after Lord John's return to Woodnesboro' in February 1806, he writes—

Sunday, February 23.—I had a letter from J. Marsden to say that Witty, who had six puppies the 25th February (?), had suckled four.

April 1.—I walked to Sandwich in hopes of finding Witty there, as I had written to Brooks to send her, but she was not come. Caroline's [the second Miss Smith's] birthday. She is thirteen years old.

Wednesday, April 2.—I went to Sandwich and found Witty.

Thursday, April 3.—I had Witty clipped all over by Southey.

And the following entries in the account-book have evident reference to 'Witty':—

	Received		Paid	
	s.	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*
April 1.—Small whip with a whistle .			4	0
„ 2.—Paid for Witty's carriage by ye stage			14	6
„ 3.—To Southey for clipping Witty			1	0
„ 5.—Stuff for a bed for Witty .			4	0
„ 17.—Brush for Witty . . .			1	0
„ 20.—Lash to my little whip . .			1	4

In case any good-natured person should think that the boy had exhausted all his pocket-money in supplying his dog's wants, it may be well to add the following entry:—

	Received			Paid		
	£	*s.*	*d.*	£	*s.*	*d.*
April 26.—Letter from Mr. Adam,[1]						7
which enclosed . . .	2	0	0			

After the holidays in 1806 there is the following:—

	Received			Paid		
	£	*s.*	*d.*	£	*s.*	*d.*
Paid for a letter from Mr. Adam,					1	2
which enclosed . . .	3	0	0			
Out of which I paid to Mr. Omar for meat &c. for Witty and to Webster for bleeding her when with puppies . .				2	5	10

Thus 'Mrs. Witty' was, on the whole, an expensive dog.

Thenceforward, however, 'Witty' was her master's constant companion till, at the end of 1807, his diary for that year closes with the brief entry 'Witty was killed.' 'No documents from an authentic source' relate the cause of her death, but a grave suspicion unfortunately rests on her

[1] The Right Hon. William Adam was the Duke's agent.

memory. In a letter to his brother, Lord William writes—'I hope Witty enjoys her health; has she killed any pheasants lately?' Is it possible that, in the Liberal atmosphere of Woburn, the dog that belonged to the boy who, as a man, was to aid in repealing the old game laws, suffered death as a poacher?

Reading, writing, walking, riding, shooting, working, the boy was evidently passing a very happy life. Compared with other boys, indeed, he was backward in his studies. He only began to learn the Greek alphabet on reaching Woodnesboro', and he only commenced reading Virgil in February 1806.

Thursday, 6th.—I read an account of Virgil.

Monday, 10th.—I begun [*sic*] Virgil, and shot at the same place as on Saturday.

He had hardly begun his Virgil, however, before he determined on turning it into English verse.

> How to incline the peasant's useless field
> By care and skill abundant crops to yield:
> To rear, for show and use, all kinds of trees,
> To teach the ox his work; and frugal bees
> Require to labour for the use of man,
> Are now, Mæcenas, subjects of my plan, &c.

About the same time he composed a much better version of another poem addressed to Mæcenas. The following lines, certainly composed before their author was fifteen, are surely an excellent translation of Horace:—

> The merchant fears to find his grave
> On every rock, on every wave:
> Extols the joys of rural life,
> His babes, his gardens, and his wife;
> But soon repairs his ships in fear
> Lean poverty is drawing near.

In June the holidays began. But Lord John shall tell his own story.

Monday, 9th.—I got all my things ready, and set off in a chaise for Canterbury, where we met Captain Munro (who had invited me to dine with him). We dined in the mess at five o'clock. The dinner was very fair, and the officers nice quiet fellows. I had some

tea with Captain Munro, and he then went with me to the Fountain, where the mail had just come in. But how depressed I was when I found it was full. Luckily, Lord A. Gordon [1] had had the same disappointment, and we agreed to go in a chaise together, which made me quite merry again. A man wanted to come with us, but we would not let him. We came a very good pace all the way. We had some cold supper at Rochester; the waiter helped the beef, which was rather the worse for wear. He asked Lord A. if he should *assist* him to some beef. We got into town about six o'clock. I had a cup of tea with Lord A. at his lodgings in St. James's Street, and then came to Stable Yard [his father's house which the Duke had lent to Mr. Fox]. I went to bed, breakfasted with Mrs. Fox. I walked with William to the exhibition, Somerset House. I did not like it very much. . . . I then went to Oxford Street to see some onyx rings of Pitt, Nelson, and Fox, but the price was six guineas. I then saw written up 'Striking likenesses taken in a minute.' I went in. A very pretty girl opened the door, and said the person was not at home. I then came home, but soon went out again, and ordered 'Broad Grins' at Chappell's, &c. &c.

While Lord John was Mr. Fox's guest, Lord Melville was formally acquitted by the Lords of the charges brought against him. 'At breakfast, Mr. Fox treated the subject with good-humoured pleasantry.'[2] Not so Lord John. 'What a pity,' he wrote in his diary, 'that he who steals a penny loaf should be hung, whilst he who steals thousands of the public money should be acquitted.'

On the day after recording this, the first of his political judgments, Lord John went down to Woburn.

Monday, June 16.—The sheep-shearing begun here.[3] I rode to Crawley first, and then went to the farm where the business was going on. We dined at three o'clock. Tavistock in the chair. The dinner was cold. We sat down about eight o'clock. T. gave toasts after dinner; and after the Royal Agricultural Society of Ireland was

[1] Lord Alexander was the son of the fourth Duke of Gordon and brother of the Duchess of Bedford. He died in 1808.

[2] From a memorandum dictated to Lady Russell in 1871.

[3] In the early years of the century the sheep-shearing at Woburn was the occasion of a profuse hospitality. There is a large picture of it at Woburn by Garrard, A.R.A., which was engraved in aquatint in 1811. The engraving differs in some respects from the original, and notably in introducing prominently into the foreground the figures of Lord John and his brother Lord William.

drank [*sic*] Mr. Hoare got up, made a speech, and gave my father, which was drank with three times three and loud applause. When the company separated, I went back to the Abbey and fired off my cannons,[1] which I had done before in the morning. It was very good fun. Lord Ludlow came home ill, partly with taking too much wine.

Two days after the festival the boys left Woburn, and drove through Coventry and Birmingham to Lord Bradford's place at Weston.[2] On the 23rd—

We set off at six o'clock in the morning for Ireland. We arrived at Capel Curig about two o'clock in the morning. We went to bed, and set off again at six. . . . We breakfasted at Bangor Ferry, crossed, and went on to Holyhead, where we dined ; and, finding my father had sent a packet for us, we set off about six in the evening with a fair wind. I was soon sick, and then went to bed and did not wake again till the next morning. I got up and breakfasted, and then went on deck, when I found we had becalmed in the night. . . . We arrived in the Pigeon House about five, and set out in a chaise Mr. Draper lent us for the Phœnix Park. We passed through Dublin ; one or two parts of it very beautiful. Every other house a punch house. No gentilities walking.

Lord John stayed at the viceregal lodge till September 15, and passed his time riding, shooting, playing cricket, and, of course, when opportunity offered, going to the theatre, where his 'father and the Duchess were received with great applause.' He had eyes and ears open during the whole period. When he played backgammon he noticed 'that they used 10*d.* and 5*d.* here instead of 12*d.* and 6*d.*' 'When people are asked to dinner here,' he writes on another occasion, 'they say they are provoked. A great many were provoked to dinner here to-day.' On August 12 the Duke gave a grand dinner, and the Duchess a fancy ball in honour of the Regent's birthday. Lord John, who appeared as a Swiss peasant, 'had on a red jacket, blue breeches, silk stockings, and no waistcoat;' and six days later he brought a volume of his diary to a conclusion by the following record of a more important anniversary :—

[1] The week before he had bought two brass cannon, and men to fire at, in London for eight shillings.

[2] Lord Bradford married the eldest daughter of the fourth Lord Torrington, and was therefore uncle by marriage to the subject of these memoirs.

Monday, Aug. 18.—My birthday. I am fourteen years old. I played at cricket, and afterwards went to the play with Mrs. Seymour to see 'The Duenna' and some farce. I am 4 feet 9¼ inches high, and about 5 stone 3 weight, being 3¾ inches taller than I was this day last year.

The boy was at last growing in body as well as in mind, and recovering from his early delicacy.

The new journal and account book, which the boy opened on commencing his fifteenth year, has a characteristic title-page :—

The Journal and Accounts of Johannes Russell, &c. &c. &c. The whole collected, compiled, written, observed, arranged, beautified, corrected, amended, expunged, published, and read by himself, Vol. 2nd, with additions. The whole being a facsimile of his writing. From August 19, 1806. Phœnix Park.

> The story of my life,
> From year to year; the battles, sieges, fortune,
> That I have passed.
>
> *Othello*, act i., scene 3.
>
> I wish no other herald,
> No other speaker of my living actions,
> To keep mine honour from corruption,
> But such an honest chronicler.
>
> *Henry VIII.*, act iv., scene 2.

During the remaining days of August Lord John—so it seems from the diary—had three days' grouse-shooting without getting a shot at a grouse; and, on September 5, he set out with Lord Tavistock and Captain Ponsonby for England. After a very rough passage of eight and a half hours, in which he was 'sick all the way,' he reached Holyhead safely, slept at Capel Curig, and drove *viâ* Birmingham to Woburn. Hence, after spending a few days' shooting and going to the Bedford races, the boys left for London, where, probably because of Mr. Fox's death, they stayed at Reddish's Hotel, going, as a matter of course, 'to see Kemble in "The Octavian;"' and on the 21st arrived at Woodnesboro.' On October 8—

Tavistock and Mr. Smith went to town to attend the funeral of Mr. Fox, which will be on Friday. He died on September 13, and deprived England of more mental energy than will perhaps be united again in one man for many many years.

Perhaps the following extracts are also worth inserting :—

Sunday, October 12.—Bruce read and preached here—very bad. I read Jones's 'Letters from a Tutor to his Pupil on Education.' It is a very well-written and useful book. On Wednesday I read 'Personal Nobility,' a letter to a young nobleman on the conduct of his studies and the dignity of the peerage. It is chiefly recommending books ; but one part about religion is very good, and it is altogether very interesting.

Saturday, November 1.—I shot. I finished to-day 'Conversations on Chemistry,' a book given me by Dr. Yeates. It is extremely plain and simple, and made me acquainted with several things I did not know before.

Monday, November 3.—I finished Lope de Vega, a book given me by the author, Lord Holland. . . . It is a not very interesting subject, but there are one or two things very pretty and the work shows much talent.

Wednesday, November 5.—Eliza's [Miss Smith's] birthday. No business. I went out shooting, but only killed some little birds. I used to shoot much better than I do at present. Always miss now, have not killed a partridge yet.[1]

In the following month the diary is full of references to the varied fortunes of the general election, and thus affords conclusive evidence of the keen interest which the boy was taking in domestic politics. Towards the end of the month, the rapid progress of Napoleon after his victory at Jena filled Lord John with alarm.

How long Bonaparte will domineer over the world, and how long we can make head against him, God only knows, but the rapidity of his conquests is unexampled.

Saturday, November 29.—We set off from Woodnesboro' in the evening to dine with General Ludlow on our way to town. We slept there. General Ludlow is general of the district.

Sunday, November 30.—We got to London at 4.15 in 8¼ hours. Reddish's Hotel.

The next day Lord John went to see Kemble in 'Corio-

[1] Early in the following year Lord John commenced a sporting book, noting in it all his shots, and distinguishing his killing and missing shots. He abandoned it after filling up three pages, making the entry, 'I had some more shooting in 1807, but as I never killed anything above a hare I left off keeping a game book.'

lanus,' 'not a good part for Mrs. Siddons;' and on the two following evenings he was again at the theatre, on the last occasion 'to see "The Cabinet"—all singing, which I hate—and "Tekeli," a new melodrama, some parts very interesting; scenery very good.'

On the Saturday he was again at the playhouse to see 'John Bull,' 'not acted near so well as at Woburn;' and in the intermediate days he met Lord Howick at General Fitzpatrick's, and Charles Fox, Lord Holland's son, Lord H. Petty, Tierney, Lewis (presumably Matthew or 'Monk' Lewis), Sidney (*sic*) Smith, and some others at Holland House. 'Sidney Smith very amusing. Charles Fox a very clever boy about ten years old.'

Eight days were thus spent by this boy of fourteen in the company of Ministers and wits, or criticising some of the first actors of the day. On Monday, December 8, his brothers and he left town for Woburn, and on the following Sunday—

We left Woburn about eight o'clock on Sunday morning, and got to Wolverhampton that night, to Oswestry on Monday, to Capel Curig on Tuesday, and Holyhead on Wednesday, where we got a packet to ourselves, and set sail at five. We landed at a miserable town called Balbriggan at four the next day, the wind having blown so hard in the night that the packet could not reach Dublin till Friday. My father (as we had sent an express to him) ordered a barouche to be brought for us, which took us to Phœnix Park in 2½ hours on Friday, December 19. All well at the Phœnix.

Wednesday, December 31.—Concluded the year 1806. I passed the year very happily, and had it not been for the length of the journeys, I should have liked going to Ireland very much, but it is not so pleasant as Woburn. Tavistock went no more to Woodnesboro', and set off for Cambridge a few days before I went to Woodnesboro'.

Lord John stayed in Dublin till the end of January, he and his elder brother being evidently on the most intimate terms with Lord Harrington's[1] family, one of whose daughters (Lady Anna Maria Stanhope) was to become Lady Tavistock. On the 6th the Harringtons gave a great fancy Twelfth-Night ball at the Royal Hospital, when the future Prime Minister appeared in the character of 'an old woman,' and on the 19th

[1] Lord Harrington commanded the forces in Ireland in 1807.

they followed up the ball with some private theatricals, in which 'I spoke the Prologue, my own.'

The gaieties of a gay Dublin winter were not over. In the following week Lord John was at three balls, and on the Saturday he left Ireland.

We got on board the packet at six in the evening, but did not leave Dublin Bay till four on Sunday morning. We got to Holyhead in ten hours and to Gwinder [? Gwydr] at night, Corwen the next, and Weston [Lord Bradford's] the next, where we stayed till Thursday, when we came to Woburn in a day with George Bridgeman.[1] . . . Bridgeman and I came up to town with Mr. Adam on Sunday, February 8, and I went to Lord Bath's,[2] where I stayed till Sunday, 15th, when I arrived at Woodnesboro' by mail and found Lord Hartington there.

[1] Lord Bradford's eldest son. He was three years older than Lord J. Russell.

[2] Lord John's uncle by marriage. Lady Bath was the Lady Weymouth to whom Lord John's mother wrote in 1796. See *ante* p. 2.

CHAPTER II.

EDUCATION.

IN relating the story of Lord John Russell's life from 1792 to 1807, it has been possible to lean almost exclusively on his own diaries and on his own memoranda. They give a picture of a delicate and sensitive boy entering with zest and courage into pursuits for which his strength is hardly equal; backward in his studies but precocious in his knowledge; thrown, by his birth and connections into occasional intercourse with the first men of the day; interested in politics, fascinated by the stage; and in all that he did and all that he wrote, displaying honesty and truth.

His return to Woodnesboro' in 1807 may perhaps be conveniently taken as the commencement of a new era in his career. At this time he ceased to make the minute daily records of his life which have hitherto made it possible to follow the story, substituting for them a narrative written at intervals. At this time, moreover, the measures were in progress which led in the following month to the fall of the Talents Administration, the consequent retirement of the Duke of Bedford from the Irish viceroyalty, and the formation of the Tory Ministry which, under the Duke of Portland, Mr. Perceval, and Lord Liverpool, was destined to govern England for twenty years.

These events would, under any circumstances, have given Lord John an increased interest in politics. Boys in their teens take keen interest in their fathers' political fortunes. But the circumstances under which the Talents Administration was driven from office must have increased this feeling. For the fall of the Ministry was due to a despatch of the Duke of Bedford which embodied the hereditary policy of the Russells — the admission of Roman Catholics into the

army, and the employment of Roman Catholic gentlemen as sheriffs.[1]

It is difficult now to believe that a moderate and reasonable proposal of this character should have split up the Cabinet, alarmed the Crown, and frightened the people. Yet these results immediately followed its introduction. The Tory Ministry, succeeding to office, was almost compelled to dissolve Parliament, and the general election, fought under such circumstances, naturally provoked the strong Protestant feeling which is perhaps even still a dominant though latent influence in English politics.

How great an interest Lord John was taking in these matters will be seen from the following extract from his journal:—

In most of the elections the Opposition was beat. A senseless and unfounded cry of 'No Popery' had prevailed on many zealous electors to reject staunch and tried men for hirelings whom Government had sent down. Lord William Russell [his uncle] lost his election for Surrey, being surprised by the opposition of Mr. Sumner, as many of the Whigs did not exert themselves till the poll was almost over. However, Pym and General Fitzpatrick beat Mr. Osborne from Bedford county.[1] Lord Howick gave up Northumberland. At Cambridge University poor Lord Henry Petty was completely beat. Lord Palmerston, the Ministerial candidate, brought down Sir Vicary Gibbs to receive his second votes; but Lord Henry Petty's friends, despairing of his Lordship's success, placed Lord Euston at the head of the poll, and Sir V. Gibbs turned out Lord Palmerston. The

[1] The measure was a consequence of the Union. In Ireland, by an Act of 1793, Roman Catholics were allowed to hold—in England they were not allowed to hold—commissions in the army and militia. The Whigs contended that a Roman Catholic who held a commission in an Irish militia regiment was liable to a penalty if his regiment was transferred to England. The Tories declared that the Mutiny Act, by compelling him to perform the duty, virtually protected him in its performance.

[1] In the midst of this election Dr. Cartwright wrote to Lord John, 'Had you been this last week in Bedfordshire, you might have been of great use in firing off election squibs and crackers. The writers on both sides were very dull and on Osborne's very scurrilous. Had I thought of it before, I would have prevailed upon you to have sent us a few epigrams at least. It will now be too late, for before they can arrive the election will be over. It is now a matter of great uncertainty which will be the successful candidate, the General or Osborne, who by last night's poll was only nineteen behind; and I know he will to-day poll no fewer than seventeen divines, staunch supporters of Church and King.

University totally disgraced themselves by choosing Lord Henry Petty when in office and deserting him when out. Mr. Roscoe was hooted at Liverpool on the cry of 'No Popery,' and every Whig was called a Papist. Sheridan, neglecting to canvass for Westminster, lost it. Sir Christopher Baynes in vain endeavoured to raise the cry of 'No Popery' in Middlesex. At Canterbury, Sandwich, Dover, and Kincardineshire, the Ministerial candidates were beat. Colonel Ponsonby declined Derry. We were beat in Hampshire and Durham. Fuller gained Surrey. Grattan was returned for Dublin. At the meeting of Parliament Ministers disowned the cry. Mr. Perceval alone said that it was the general cry of the people and must be well founded. I stayed at Woodnesboro' till July 15, when I came to London; and, after having passed a few days there and a few at Woburn, I began my tour through Scotland with my father, the Duchess, and Dr. Hunt. For this tour see Volume III.

Volume III. is entitled, 'A Journal of John Russell during a Tour to the Lakes and Scotland,' and commences—'On Monday, August 3, 1807, I left Woburn Abbey in company with the Duke and Duchess of Bedford and the Rev. Dr. Hunt.' The tourists passed through Northampton, Leicester, Manchester, Lancaster, and Kendal, reaching Windermere on the following Thursday. There they were the guests of Mr. Curwen, and made acquaintance with Dr. Watson, Bishop of Llandaff.[1]

He is a man of a very strong mind, very great learning, and an astonishing power of voice. He put me in mind of the idea I had formed of Dr. Johnson, excepting that his manners were perfectly those of a gentleman. . . . The Bishop attacked some lawyers who were there concerning their defending men whom they knew to be guilty. The lawyers defended themselves very well. In my opinion the lawyer should urge everything that can be pleaded from law, but not use the law for a purpose when it was evidently intended to mean otherwise. The Bishop is very vain. He said, for instance, 'I made a very long speech, and I think a very good one,' &c. . . . Nothing can exceed the respect with which he is looked upon.

Turning their backs on Windermere, the tourists followed what is now one of the most familiar roads in England to

[1] Mr. Curwen was one of the pioneers of reform. He carried in 1809 a measure for preventing the sale of seats in the House of Commons. Watson, Bishop of Llandaff, is chiefly recollected (1) as the author of *An Apology for the Bible*, a book written in reply to Tom Paine's *Age of Reason*; and (2) as living continuously in the Lakes without going to his see.

Keswick, where they passed the beautiful cottage of Lord William Gordon, 'hid in so retired a bay that it cannot be seen even from the top of lofty Skiddaw. Everything here is executed in so finished and appropriate a taste that it is almost the only place concerning which I could say "If this were mine nothing should be altered."' But, alas! even on the banks of Derwentwater, in 1807, there were drawbacks to enjoyment.

Mr. Pocklington, a gentleman from Yorkshire, is a person who has rendered himself odious to every traveller of taste by building houses, &c., on the lake. He turned the course of his waterfall, so that there might be a good gravel walk made to the top, and moreover has built amongst some trees a white wall with a door and two windows in it, which he calls a hermitage.

Shaking the dust off his feet in testimony against the utilitarian of Yorkshire, Lord John proceeded by Pooley Bridge to Ulleswater. After duly admiring that beautiful lake, the party drove through Carlisle, 'where there is nothing seemingly sufficient to excite curiosity,' and Langholm to Hawick. From Hawick, on the following day, they went to Selkirk, sleeping at Lord Somerville's.

Sunday, 16*th*.—Walter Scott, the minstrel of the 19th century, came to breakfast with us. He afterwards went with me to Melrose Abbey . . . one of the most beautiful ruins perhaps in the world.

Tuesday, 18*th*.—I went with Dr. Hunt to Walter Scott's house.[1] We passed through Galashiels, a pleasant manufacturing town on the Tweed. Indeed, we never quitted the Tweed during our whole drive. At last we forded the river and came to his house just in time to eat a good breakfast. I then went shooting and missed two shots at grouse. I then had the pleasure of walking with Walter Scott through grounds which nature had adorned with a beauty which art cannot imitate. After passing a very pleasant evening we retired to bed betimes.

Wednesday, 19*th*.—My father and the Duchess came to breakfast at Mr. Scott's. Soon after breakfast we left his house to continue our journey.

Ascending the Tweed, the excursionists crossed into the Valley of the Clyde; and, passing Lanark, came to Hamilton, where they were the guests of the Duke of Hamilton; and,

[1] In 1807 Sir W. Scott was living at Ashestiel. Abbotsford was not purchased till 1811.

after spending the next few days in visiting factories at Peebles, and ironworks at Carron, and in admiring the streets of Glasgow, 'the best built and handsomest town I ever saw,' and the adjacent country, they came to Stirling. 'There is a big but thin hill, rising in the middle of the Carse of Stirling; on the top of it is Stirling Castle, and the houses creep up the hill-side like chickens to get under the protection of the old hen.' Their route lay thence through Perth, Lochearnhead, Callander, and the Trosachs, which, though they had not yet been hallowed by 'The Lady of the Lake,' 'appeared before us in majestic glory. Never did I see so fine an assemblage of mountains—all forms, all sizes, one is covered with wood, another with heath. Loch Kitturin [*sic*] was soon before us, and instantly delighted us.'

Thence, after spending a few days with the Duke of Montrose at Buchanan, where 'His Grace gave us an excellent turtle soup, the best I ever tasted,' the party proceeded up Loch Long, over 'the dreadful hill of Glencroe, the most formidable pull for a carriage I ever saw,' to Inverary.

> And now I first got a sight of the finest place I ever saw—Inverary. Reaching the top of a gentle ascent, we saw the whole view to advantage. The castle with four towers appeared in the midst of a small plain. The lake made a bay before it, and at the end of the bay appeared the town, which gave a complete idea of dependence on the castle. It is more like a handsome front of a great man's offices than a town. The Duke had a large party in the house, and we were handsomely received.

After passing five days most agreeably in this hospitable house, they bade adieu to Inverary, and drove past Loch Awe to Killin and Loch Tay—where Lord Breadalbane's new house at Taymouth contrasted unfavourably, in Lord John's opinion, with Inverary. Passing Dunkeld, 'we were soon delighted by seeing the Pass of Killiecrankie where Lord Dundee lost his life.'

From Killiecrankie the tourists drove to Blair Athol, and thence through a gloomy country to Kinrara, the Duchess of Bedford's house on the banks of the Spey. There they rested eight days, and thence proceeded to Inverness, 'our journey's end.'

Leaving Inverness, the party passed over the Field of Culloden, and Lord John soon after began to inquire how far it was to a still more interesting field—the Heath of the Witches. Thence their road was through Fochabers (where they naturally stayed at Gordon Castle), Cullen, Banff, and Turriff, to Aberdeen. From Aberdeen they followed the coast to Stonehaven and Dundee, where they were the guests of Lord Kinnaird. A few days' easy travelling brought them to Edinburgh, 'the pride of Scotchmen and capital of their beautiful country.' There they, of course, visited Holyrood, going first to the gallery 'where the imaginary portraits of Scotch kings are placed, where the representative peers are chosen, and where two French gentlemen hear mass every Sunday. The portraits are shockingly painted, the peers are shamefully chosen, and the High Mass would shock the ears of those who cried No Popery.' Three days afterwards the party left Edinburgh, and, after passing a night with Lord Lauderdale at Dunbar, Lord John brought both tour and journey to a close at Ayton.

Steam has made the country through which Lord John thus travelled accessible to men with only moderate purses. In 1807, such a tour as that which has just been described was undertaken by, or possible for, only the few. From Ayton, Lord John returned alone to Woodnesboro'; and perhaps it may be of some interest to record the cost of such a journey eighty years ago. Lord John paid 8*l.* 19*s.* 6*d.* for his place in the mail from Ayton to London; 1*l.* 14*s.* 6*d.* for his place from London to Canterbury; 15*s.* for a chaise from Canterbury to Woodnesboro'; 13*s.* 2*d.* to postboys; and 3*l.* 0*s.* 6*d.* to guards and coachmen between Berwick and Woodnesboro'. Without counting the cost of food in a journey which occupied three days and three nights, or of the inevitable play in London, Lord John spent in actual travelling rather more than 15*l.* on a journey which a first-class passenger could now accomplish for less than 4*l.*

The journal—if it can be so called—for the next few months is so short that it may be quoted almost in its integrity.

After passing nearly three months in seeing the beautiful land-

scapes of Scotland, I left Ayton on October 19 in the mail for London. We passed though Newcastle, a populous place famous for coal and glass. But the place I admired most was Durham. Its situation upon the verge of a hill, the river which encircles it, and the grandeur of its cathedral, made me place it in the number of the most beautiful cities of England. We were at York at midnight, and, having come though Doncaster and Huntingdon, we arrived in London on Saturday morning after a journey of two days and three nights.

I got into the mail again on Sunday for Woodnesboro', which I left on December 28 for Woburn. . . .

After this I passed a week at Ampthill, whilst my father was in town. We met again at Woburn on Saturday, January 25. Tavistock and William followed the day after. . . .

The Duke of Gloucester, a man of no very brilliant talents, but of good sense and judgment, is the only man to save the country. He will probably marry the Princess Charlotte of Wales.[1] In the Houses of Lords and Commons on the day of the meeting, Ministers cut a most despicable figure on the Copenhagen affair. Several Lords entered their protest against it. Ministers all told different stories about the sources of their information. Lord Mulgrave said they got it from Bonaparte. Whilst he was speaking Lord Eldon said to Lord Ellenborough that it was impossible to muzzle a fool.

I left Woburn on February 6, and, after passing two or three days in town, returned to Woodnesboro'. The day before I left town I went to the House of Lords for the first time, and heard an interesting debate on the Copenhagen expedition.[2]

On March 25 the frost was so hard as to freeze Mr. Smith's pond entirely. On the same day Clare and I went to shoot on the shore, and found it a very pleasant day. About the same time William again came to Canterbury as aide-de-camp to Sir George Ludlow, and I went every now and then to spend a day with him. It was

[1] The Duke of Gloucester was the nephew of George III. Instead of marrying the Princess Charlotte, he married his cousin Princess Mary, and died without issue.

[2] In August 1807 the Ministry sent an expedition to the Baltic to seize the Danish fleet at Copenhagen, though Denmark was then at peace with England. The proceeding was justified on the ground that Napoleon—as the Ministry believed—intended to compel the Court of Denmark to close the Sound, and to seize the Danish navies for the invasion of Great Britain and Ireland. Lord W. Russell saw his first service in this expedition. The propriety of the expedition has been often questioned, and perhaps the late Sir G. Lewis described it most accurately as 'an extreme exercise of the rights of war.'

about this time that Mr. Perceval first attempted to conquer France by depriving it of bark.[1]

I went to dine with Sir G. Ludlow on March 31. . . . They talked about Winsor's gas lights, which they said would only answer in lighthouses, printing houses, &c., and would not succeed in private houses. It is hydrogen gas, which, being communicated by pipes under Pall Mall, lights the street most beautifully.[2] . . .

Tavistock left Cambridge in May, having been there, in supposition, two years. . . .

In the end of May, or beginning of June, my brother William got a troop in the 23rd L. D., after changing from the Royals, in which he had a lieutenancy, to the Canadian Fencibles, and afterwards to 81st Infantry. He had some trouble occasioned by a job of Mr. Greenwood's to get Lord Fitzroy Somerset in the 23rd first.[3] We had some good rook-shooting at Waldershare on June 17 and 23, in both of which I killed forty-four rooks.[4] . . . We stayed at Woodnesboro' the whole of June. . . . On the 30th, Clare, Butler, and I left in a post-chaise for London, where we arrived at half-past six. After staying in London a week I went with my father and the Duchess to Cheneys, and on the following morning we . . . came to Woburn. About July 20 Lord and Lady Holland, Lord Erskine, the Duke of Argyle [*sic*], Mr. Broome [? Brougham],

[1] The allusion is to the Orders in Council under which Mr. Perceval endeavoured to retaliate on Napoleon's Baltic decree by regulating British trade with the Continent. Under these orders the exportation of all goods to France was prohibited which were not carried from this country and had not paid an export duty here. But there were certain articles which the Minister decided that the Continent should have on no terms, and amongst others quinine, or Jesuit's bark as it was called. Sydney Smith, writing as Peter Plymley, said, 'You cannot seriously suppose the people to be so degraded as to look to their safety from a man who proposes to subdue Europe by keeping it without Jesuit's bark.' Hence evidently Lord John's statement.

[2] Gas was invented by Murdoch in 1792. The Lyceum was lit with it by Mr. Winsor in 1803, and it was adopted experimentally as a street illuminant in 1807, and generally in 1814, in London. Sir G. Ludlow's guests were not the only sceptics as to the practicability of its use. Sir H. Davy is said to have declared that you might as well talk of ventilating London with windmills, as of lighting it with gas.

[3] It would be interesting to ascertain whether any Somerset recorded in his diary that the future Lord Raglan lost his step through a job of the Duke of Bedford's.

[4] Alluding to one of these days' shooting, Lord John wrote to Lady A. M. Stanhope, 'About a week ago I went rook-shooting at a place of Lord Guilford's, and shot most miraculously—*for me*—for in about one hundred shots I killed twenty-one rooks; but I must not forget that in all probability I should not have hit one had it not been for certain trees and places to rest my gun on.'

and others were there. . . . On August 8 I was in London at Tavistock's wedding,[1] and on the Saturday I returned to Woburn. Two days afterwards I went to Weston with William, who in a short time after left that place for Dublin. After passing three weeks there very pleasantly, I went with Lord Bradford though Lemington [*sic*] to Stony Stratford; from thence I went to Woburn, and thence to Oakley, where I found Lord and Lady Tavistock. On September 4 we all went to Woburn, where there were soon assembled my father, the Duchess, Lord and Lady Tavistock, Lord William, Francis, and Gertrude.[2] Lady William[3] died on August 30. On September 18 I came to town with the Duchess and Francis, and on the 20th I came to Woodnesboro' in a chaise with Clare and Butler.[4]

It was probably while Lord and Lady Holland were at Woburn in July 1808, that they suggested to the Duke of Bedford that Lord John should accompany them in the following autumn in a tour which they contemplated making in Spain—at that time the theatre of events interesting in themselves and pregnant with mighty consequences to the future of Europe.

Austerlitz and Jena had placed central Europe at the feet of the French Emperor. The Treaty of Tilsit had made Russia his ally; and this country alone, secure from its naval predominance, maintained the struggle with France. For the moment, indeed, the combatants experienced an inability to engage on a common arena. The one was virtually lord on land, the other as indisputably mistress of the seas. Both powers, unable to settle the issue by the shock of arms, in-

[1] Lord Tavistock married Lady A. M. Stanhope, eldest daughter of Lord Harrington. At the time of his marriage Lord Tavistock was only twenty years of age. He could, however, plead his father's example as his excuse. His father was not twenty years old when he married his first wife.

[2] Lord William Russell's eldest son and daughter.

[3] Lady W. Russell was the eldest daughter of George, fourth Earl of Jersey.

[4] Lord John says that, during his stay at Woodnesboro' he had 'gone through two books and a half of the Georgics, two Satires, an Epistle, the *Ars Poetica*, and a book of the Odes of Horace; Greek, &c.; in summing, decimal fractions, algebra, and the first book of Euclid. I had read for Smith Stanyan's [*sic*] *Grecian History*, and De Lolme *On the Constitution*; and, for my own amusement, Robertson's *History of Charles V.*, *The Tatler*, Spenser's *Faerie Queen*, Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Young's *Night Thoughts*, Brydone's *Tour to Sicily and Malta*, Mr. Fox's *History of James II.*, *The Story of Romeo and Juliet* in Italian, and for Goujon (the French master) a volume and a half of Rollin, and three of Racine's plays.'

vented other means of ruining one another. Napoleon, by the continental system, endeavoured to exclude British commerce from the entire coasts of Europe. The Portland Ministry, by the Orders in Council, retaliated by saying that the Continent should have no goods except those which came through England. In this strange and unprecedented contest, her command of the seas and her rich colonial possessions gave England some advantage; and Napoleon imagined that he could redress the balance by acquiring colonies for France. Two European nations possessed a colonial empire which exceeded in extent, and perhaps equalled in importance, the rich possessions of England. One of them, Portugal, was the hereditary ally of England; the other, Spain, weakened by centuries of misrule, was under the sway of an impotent King and a powerful Minister. Napoleon easily prevailed on the Spanish Government to agree to a treaty for the partition of Portugal. French troops were marched into the Peninsula for the purpose of carrying out this arrangement. The royal family of Portugal, leaving the capital, which was occupied by Marshal Junot, fled across the Atlantic to Brazil; and Napoleon, pressing the advantage which he had secured, and disregarding the treaties which he had made, directed his troops to occupy Madrid, procured the abdication of the Spanish Monarch, and placed his own brother Joseph on the throne of Spain. The power of France, which was already carried to the boundaries of Russia, was thus extended throughout the Spanish Peninsula.

In the spring of 1808 the policy of Napoleon seemed as successful as it was unscrupulous. But, in the course of May the Spanish people rose against the French; they drove them from Madrid; they held Saragossa and other places; and they kindled, in their resistance, a beacon-fire perceptible to the nations of Europe.

The rise of the Spanish people naturally excited enthusiasm in this country. The Tory Ministry, which governed England, rightly interpreting the national sentiment, decided on sending effectual aid to the people who had manifested so striking a resolution to help themselves. They despatched Sir Arthur Wellesley, who had commanded the land force

at Copenhagen in the previous year, to Portugal, and that general began his great career in the Peninsula by defeating Junot at Vimiera. This battle, though it was followed by the unfortunate convention of Cintra, had the effect of freeing Portugal from the presence of the French, and of encouraging the Ministry to make a new effort. Sir John Moore was sent into the north of Spain with orders to advance into the interior. It was hoped that the Spanish armies, reinforced by his presence, would obtain the evacuation of the entire Peninsula.

It was the misfortune of the Whig Party at this conjuncture that they misunderstood both the conditions of the campaign and the opinions of their fellow-countrymen. Instead of boldly supporting the Ministry in a war which was now conducted under circumstances which would have made abstention both dishonourable and unwise, their leaders declaimed against the folly of a new campaign, and insisted on the paramount necessity of making peace.

Some few members of the Whig party did not share the views of their leaders in this respect. Lord Holland, for example, recollected that his uncle, Mr. Fox, had adopted in office the patriotic course of supporting a war which he had resisted in opposition. He declined consequently to admit that peace at any price was the hereditary policy of the party to which he belonged. Personally acquainted with Spain, he had friends in the Peninsula, who gave him a new interest in the struggle ; and, roused to enthusiasm by the noble conduct which the Spaniards were displaying, he determined to visit Spain, and witness the liberation of the country.

The views which Lord Holland entertained were naturally embraced by his young companion. Lord John Russell, as he said himself in later life, 'joined to sympathy for Spain a boyish hatred of Napoleon, who had treacherously obtained possession of an independent country' by force and fraud.' He went consequently to Spain with all the enthusiasm of youth, about to be introduced to new scenes, and to participate in a great national triumph. Falmouth, at that time, was one of the ports easiest of access ; and there Lord John joined the Hollands in October, and—

About nine o'clock in the morning of November 3, 1808, I had the pleasure of finding myself in the port of Coruña after a passage of 3½ days from Falmouth. We had been detained more than a fortnight at that place, waiting at one time for the arrival of the 'Amazon' frigate from Plymouth, at another for orders from the Admiralty to enable her to sail, and lastly for a north-east wind to carry us to the coast of Spain.'

Coruña was in a state of excitement. Four English regiments were quartered there; additional troops were constantly arriving. Lord Holland had Spanish friends in the town, with whom he and his party frequently dined; and a theatre 'not much less than the Haymarket,' and with 'tolerable actors,' introduced Lord John night after night to the Spanish drama and Spanish dancing.

A fortnight was thus spent in Coruña, and in a short expedition to Santiago and its monastery; at its conclusion, Lord Holland and his party set out on their projected journey to Madrid. They slept the first night at Betanzos; but, in the course of the next day, they received the unpleasant news that the French were again advancing. General Blake had given way before them in Biscay; a Spanish army had been driven out of Burgos; and Sir John Moore himself was retreating to the coast. The projected journey had, of course, to be abandoned. Lord Holland's party returned to Coruña, where all was alarm and confusion. Instead of participating in a great national triumph, the party was suddenly confronted with the first symptoms of disaster.[1]

Coruña was evidently no place for non-combatants to remain in. The only question was whither to go. Lord Holland seems to have seriously considered the alternative of going by sea to Cadiz or by land to Lisbon; and, to the alarm of his friends in England, he adopted the latter course. Leaving Coruña on December 4, the party reached Vigo on the 9th, Coimbra on the 27th, Pombal on the 29th, and Lisbon in the beginning of 1809. The cavalcade must have been picturesque:—

[1] Lord John said in his diary, 'We received such bad news on the 18th that I had not courage to continue this journal, which remained untouched for six days.'

Our whole regiment consists of the following animals: Lord Holland and Anne on horses; Lady Holland and nine men on mules; Mrs. Brown in a litter; thirteen muleteers and soldiers; ten mules carrying people; two in the litter; four mules with cargo; three without any load.

Nor was the march without excitement. Lord John wrote to his father from Coimbra :—

If Sir J. Moore retreats we shall soon be in England; if not, I hope we shall get to Seville.

And on January 7, 1809, from Lisbon :—

We have been here four days. I think it is the most disagreeable town I ever saw, and now agree with you that our journey to Portugal was a wild scheme. But at the time of its being proposed I preferred it to going by sea to Cadiz, as I thought we should see so much more. But it is now doubtful whether we or the French shall be at Seville first.

Under such circumstances Lady Holland, who was in delicate health, naturally hesitated to plunge into the interior of the country; and it was not till January 21 that she was encouraged, by the escort of an English regiment for a portion of the route, to make the attempt.

Perhaps if they had not set out then they would have abandoned the journey altogether, for on January 16 Sir John Moore was defeated and slain at Coruña, and in the middle of the following month the north of Portugal was again in the occupation of the French. The enemy, however, did not penetrate in the spring of 1809 to the south of Madrid, and Lord Holland and his friends remained in security. In March, indeed, the constant successes of the enemy induced them temporarily to retire to Cadiz, where the sea afforded easier means of escape. But, after a few days, they regained their confidence and returned to Seville. Reaching it originally on January 30, they made it their head-quarters till the 11th of the following May, enjoying, as Lord Russell said in his old age—

the society of some old acquaintances of Lord Holland, and of the charming women who made up by their beauty and their mother-wit for a total want of knowledge and accomplishments.

He wrote to his father on March 23—

I am quite satisfied with my stay at Seville. I have seen many of the most remarkable Spaniards, heard a great many anecdotes relating to the Revolution, and learnt to talk a little Spanish. I have besides enjoyed the climate, and seen many things worth seeing. I could stay here another month with great pleasure.

On May 11 the party finally left Seville, hoping to procure a passage in the 'Ocean' for England. But on arriving at Cadiz they found that the 'Ocean' was in charge of a convoy of fifty vessels, that the incumbrance of their company was likely to detain her for some weeks on her voyage, that moreover she wanted repair and was therefore uncomfortable. Lord Holland and his party consequently decided on remaining at Cadiz and awaiting some other opportunity. Comfortable means of transport for delicate ladies were, however, in those days rare; and ultimately the party was forced to retrace its steps and wend its way through Badajoz and the unhealthy plains of Estremadura to Lisbon, where they embarked for England. Lord John himself caught a fever in the journey, which detained both him and his friends a few days at Badajoz, and perhaps accounted for the imperfect conclusion of his first Spanish journal. But in the middle of July the party re-entered Lisbon, whence, after a nine months' absence, they returned to England.

Such is a short outline of Lord John's first visit to Spain. Arriving with an enthusiastic faith in the Spanish cause, he had been bitterly disappointed at the events which had deranged his plans and smothered his hopes. He wrote to his father in April:—

Having seen the cause of a people who rose in the most glorious manner mismanaged by high and respectable generals and statesmen . . . . and the enthusiasm and resources of a nation so ill employed in their aid, I shall go home not a little inclined to be democratical.

But, though the failure of the cause was filling him with distrust of the Ministry, he was annoyed at finding from his English newspapers that the Whigs, instead of suggesting increased efforts, were denouncing the war.

I take the liberty of informing you and your Opposition friends that the French have not conquered the whole of Spain.

So he wrote to his father on April 24, 1809; and he added on May 7:—

I do not admire the line Opposition has taken on the subject of Spain. . . . Lord Grey's speech appears to me either a mere attempt to plague Ministers for a few hours or a declaration against the principle of the people's right to depose an infamous despot. . . . It seems to be the object of Opposition to prove that Spain is conquered, and that the Spaniards like being robbed and murdered.

The young Whig of sixteen summers was taking a much truer view of the situation and expressing much sounder opinions than his older friends at home.

Speaking of this tour in his old age, Lord John said—

I acquired thereby a very competent knowledge of the Spanish character, manners, and language, and lost the opportunity of being thoroughly grounded in the Greek language, an opportunity which, as I never went to an English university, I never completely recovered.'

But this paragraph gives a very imperfect idea of the manner in which he spent his time. Here is the account which he gave of himself in a letter to his father on the 27th of April:—

The chief object of my letter is to tell you how I have employed my time in Spain and Portugal. Much, of course, has been employed in seeing things worth seeing and hearing people worth hearing. I have often travelled eight or nine or twelve hours a day without looking into a book. I will not say that I have not lost much time. In Latin I have finished Tacitus 'de Moribus Germanorum,' and read his 'Life of Agricola;' four books of Virgil, that is the 'Æneid,' for I think I finished the Eclogues at Falmouth; two books of the Odes of Horace; Sallust's 'Conspiracy of Catiline;' Cicero, 'de Amicitia'—of which I had read a few pages before—also 'de Senectute;' four books of Livy from the beginning of the 2nd Punic War. I began the other day the first book of all, which I have nearly finished. I now know enough of Latin to be very much amused by a book that is not very difficult.

I began the third book of Euclid at Coruña with Mr. Allen;[1] the

[1] Mr. Allen was the librarian, and close friend, of Lord Holland.

day after to-morrow I shall do the last proposition of the sixth. For the two months I was here before, I had a Spanish master who talked with all the Castilian purity. I can talk and read a little Spanish, and have attempted to write it, which, I think, would not be a very difficult thing to attain. At present I have got a French master, and am endeavouring to understand and write that language, which, I believe, is much more necessary.

But for my Greek I can say nothing. I learnt it in so imperfect a way (owing to my own idleness) that I more than once told Lord Clare that I had determined to give it up. Reading Greek was to me the most unpleasant thing possible. But, seeing those who understand the language take so much pleasure in it, and believing that any person, who is not quite a dunce, may learn a language with a little trouble, I have determined to work at it seriously as soon as I get home ; and I think that I should stay at Mr. Smith's three or four months for that purpose. I do not know what you will think best for me afterwards ; but the thing I should most dislike, and, I think, least profit by, would be an endeavour to acquire Scotch knowledge in a Scotch town. Political economy may surely be studied in England. As for metaphysics I cannot even understand the word.

Before, however, reaching England he had changed his opinion.

Spithead : August 10, 1809.

My dear Father,—We are at present anchored here in the 'Lively,' after a voyage of three weeks. We had foul winds at the beginning of our voyage, but since that we have been very lucky. . . . Lord Holland and Mr. Allen have been talking to me of the advantages of going to Edinburgh for the next winter. They say that I am as yet too young to go to an English university ; that I should learn more there in the meantime than I should anywhere else ; that Professor Playfair, besides being a learned, is a very pleasant man, and that I should pass my time very agreeably with him. I own I am convinced by their arguments, though I said before that I should so much dislike it. Mr. Allen says that, in case I should go there, it would be best to consult Lord Lauderdale, who knows everything about it ; that it would be very foolish to take any tutor there from England, and that it would be necessary beforehand to learn the elements of algebra, trigonometry, and conic sections. I dare say I should like it very much for one winter ; but I hope you will do what you think best for me without consulting my inclinations.

Lord John could have had very little doubt as to what his

father would think best. Lord Tavistock had gone to Cambridge and received only a 'pretended education.' The Duke declared that 'nothing was learned in the English universities;' and, welcoming his son's altered views, applied to 'Professor Playfair to receive him into his house at Edinburgh; and, without personally giving him instruction, to superintend and direct the course of his studies at the University.'

Lord John soon discovered the advantages of the arrangement. In his own words dictated to Lady Russell:—

> Professor Playfair was one of the most delightful men, and at the same time one of the most profound mathematicians of his age and country. The simplicity of his manners and the elevation of his sentiments were very striking. He was a very zealous lover of liberty; and I have often heard him say that if we could be governed by angels it would be a misfortune for mankind, as they would thereby be induced to dispense with those exertions of mind and heart which are the causes of the greatest works of science and of letters, and of the noblest efforts in behalf of the freedom, improvement, and civilisation of the world.

And in the preface to 'Recollections and Suggestions' he wrote of his stay in Edinburgh:—

> There I had my studies directed and my character developed by one of the best and the noblest, the most upright, the most benevolent, and the most liberal of all philosophers.

Lord John reached Edinburgh in the autumn of 1809; he left it in the summer of 1812. During this period Mr. Playfair's house was his usual residence, and at his table he was introduced to the society which has invested the Edinburgh of the closing years of the eighteenth and the opening years of the nineteenth century with an interest for all reflective persons. While Lord John was at Edinburgh, Dugald Stewart and Playfair were attracting by their reputation men of promise to its University; Jeffrey was editing the 'Edinburgh Review;' Scott was an occasional visitor to the town, over whose natural beauties he has thrown a halo of romance; Hope was presiding over the Court of Session, Lord Cockburn was practising at the bar; and Henry Mackenzie was reposing

in the autumn of his life on the reputation which 'The Man of Feeling' had won him in his youth. Such were some of the men whose memory even now gives an interest to the Edinburgh which Lord John knew. And, if Edinburgh itself were the centre of an intellectual society which no other town of its size could have afforded, the University of Edinburgh was the scene of busy labour and speculative investigation. Sir James Mackintosh had said of it nearly a quarter of a century before, and the description was still applicable—

> It is not easy to conceive a university where reading was more fashionable, where indolence and ignorance were more disreputable. Every mind was in a state of fermentation.

In the winter of 1809–10 Lord John studied in the class of ethics or moral philosophy when Dugald Stewart was professor. On Stewart being temporarily incapacitated from ill-health, he continued these studies under Dr. Thomas Brown; and, on Dugald Stewart's return to his class-room, he was selected by his fellow-students to present him with an address (drawn up by a committee over which Lord John had himself presided) congratulating him on the recovery of his health, and expressing the feelings that had been excited by the labours of his substitute. Stewart finally retired from his professorial duties at the close of the winter session of 1809–10. In the session of 1810–11 Lord John attended the lectures of his successor, Dr. Thomas Brown, as well as those of Professor Playfair on physics or natural philosophy. In the session of 1811–12 Lord John resumed his attendance on Professor Playfair's lectures, and also attended the lectures of Professor Hope on chemistry. He finally left the University at the end of this session without taking his degree. But 'in the early part of this century, graduation in arts was almost dormant in the University of Edinburgh.'[1]

It will be seen that the course of studies which Lord John pursued at Edinburgh differed widely from the training which he would have received at either of the great English univer-

[1] I am mainly indebted both for the facts and language of this paragraph, and for much that follows about the Speculative Society, to the researches which have been kindly made for me by Professor Fraser.

sities at this time; just as the intellectual activity of the northern capital contrasted favourably with the torpor which then unfortunately characterised too frequently the course of study at Oxford and Cambridge. Intellectual activity, moreover, was promoted at Edinburgh by the existence of societies, connected with the University, and admirably designed to develop the training of its students. Among these the Medical Society had the advantage of age; but the Speculative Society had a more direct influence on Lord John Russell's future.

The Speculative Society was founded in 1764 by six young gentlemen who were at that time members of the University. Of the original founders three were still living when Lord John reached Edinburgh. One of them, William Creed, was a bookseller in the city; the second, Allan Maconochie, was adorning the Scotch Bench as Lord Meadowbank; and the third, John Bruce, was professor of logic at the University. The society was composed of thirty young men, who were elected by ballot, and were compelled to attend one evening a week during the winter and spring months, when an essay was read by a member, and a debate on some historical, literary, or political subject ensued. A certain period of attendance as an ordinary member, with the discharge of the duties attached to that position, qualified for extraordinary privilege, which exempted the member from compulsory attendance, but left him free to attend the meetings of the society. Lord John Russell was admitted to the society on April 24, 1810, on the same day as his friend Lord Killeen.[1]

The meeting of the Speculative Society at which Lord John was thus elected was the last of the session of 1809–10. He could not, under any circumstances, have taken his seat till the following November, and, as a matter of fact, the minutes of the society show that he did not attend any of its meetings until December 11, and that he was absent from illness on each of the four meetings in January 1811, and on the first meeting in February: so severely did his sickly constitution interfere with his studies and with his amusements. During the rest of the session he took part in debates

[1] Lord Killeen was the eldest son of Lord Fingall.

on the justice of the war of 1793[1]; on the conduct of Queen Elizabeth to Queen Mary; and on the imprisonment of Gale Jones.[2] He opened a debate on the education of the poor; and he wrote and read a paper on the proceedings of the Spanish Cortes[3] from September 24 to November 15, 1810, which is still preserved among the documents in the possession of the family.

In the session of 1811–12 he was still more active. On December 3 he was elected one of the five presidents of the society; on the same day he was appointed to serve on a small committee to draw up the list of questions for weekly discussion. He was a constant speaker at the societies' debates, discussing purely abstract questions—such as the policy of Alcibiades—and matters of urgent importance, such as the emancipation of South America, the expedition to Copenhagen in 1807, the expediency of Indian missions, the desirability of a legal provision for the poor, the value of Magdalen asylums, and the prospects of the Spanish War. He decided by his casting vote as Præses that the possession of Canada was of use to Great Britain; and, at the close of the session, he drew up and spoke the valedictory address, receiving the thanks of the society for doing so.

It is evident, therefore, that Lord John's career in the Speculative Society anticipated the success which he subsequently achieved in the House of Commons.[4] His active

[1] His father wrote to him, 'I like the account of your maiden speech at the Speculative Society much, and I believe it frequently happens to young speakers to forget the best part of their intended speeches.' Mr. Greville has left on record a very severe opinion of the sixth Duke of Bedford—'A more uninteresting, weak-minded, selfish character does not exist.' I have only to do with the Duke as Lord John's father, but my perusal of his letters to his son has led me to form a very different opinion of him.

[2] Gale Jones, secretary to the Corresponding Society, was committed to Newgate by the House of Commons in 1810 for publishing a scurrilous placard.

[3] Lord John forwarded a copy of this paper to his father, who wrote to him on March 21, 1811: 'I like your essay on the Cortes very much, particularly the last part of it. Your own reflections are just and sensible, and fraught with a thorough knowledge of the science of political liberty.'

And again on April 5:—

'I have again read your essay on the Cortes, and I assure you I like it still better on the second reading; it is really excellent.'

[4] Amidst his other work Lord John found leisure for his old pursuits. At

brain, however, was not entirely occupied with the labour of a university or the duties of a debating society. In the spring of 1811 he wrote for the 'Whig Register'[1] a long and important article on Parliamentary Reform. Starting with Mr. Dunning's famous proposition that the power of the Crown ought to be diminished, he argued that it could be effectually controlled by the reform of the House of Commons. 'No great and sudden change' should, however, be made.

We should add cautiously and gradually to the power of the people till it could again make head against the Crown. . . . We should proceed by Bill. First, perhaps, a Bill for triennial Parliaments; then a Bill for a purchase of a few of the boroughs, as Mr. Pitt proposed, and an extension of the franchise to Manchester, Birmingham, &c. . . . . The right of voting should certainly be allowed to copyholders. . . . The House of Commons should proceed in the work by regular and constant steps, not by one great and hazardous step.

the commencement of the session of 1810 Lord Porchester moved for an inquiry into the fatal Walcheren expedition, and carried his motion by 195 to 186 votes. This unusual Whig victory inspired Lord John to write a parody of *Lochiel's Warning*, in which Mr. Rose plays the part of the wizard and Mr. Perceval that of Lochiel. The 200 M.P.'s in the concluding line of Lord John's parody are, of course, the majority of 195.

GEO. ROSE.

Bold Spencer, bold Spencer, beware of the day,
When England shall meet thee in battle array;
For placemen out-voted rush pale on my sight,
And the clans of corruption are scattered in fight, &c.

SP. PERCEVAL.

Go, preach to pale Westmoreland, death-telling seer,
Or if Porchester's question so dreadful appear,
Draw, dotard, around thy old wavering sight,
Thy coat turned, to cover the phantoms of fright.

And so the dialogue proceeds till Geo. Rose concludes it with a parody of Campbell's best-known lines—

'Tis a sunset of jobs gives me mystical lore,
And 200 M.P.'s cast their shadows before.

[1] The article is headed 'Whig Register No. 3,' and Lord John in 1857 added a note, 'probably written in 1810.' I cannot find, after careful inquiry both in the British Museum and at Edinburgh, that any such periodical as the 'Whig Register' was ever published. I assume, therefore, that Lord John gave the name to a series of MS. articles written for his own advantage. I have found another article headed 'Whig Register,' on the conduct of the Prince Regent, among Lord John's papers.

These recommendations, made while the author was still in his teens, differed materially from his later opinions. In his 'History of Europe from the Peace of Utrecht,' published thirteen years afterwards, Lord John defended the Septennial Act and condemned triennial Parliaments;[1] while, in 1831, he originated a Reform Bill, which, discarding regular and constant steps, marched to the result by one bold stride. His essay as usual was forwarded to his father, who encouraged him to persevere.

Let me urge you to continue the 'Register,' if it be only to give you a habit of reasoning and writing on political subjects, which cannot fail to be of the greatest service to you hereafter.

At the time at which this article was written, the Whig party had encountered a disappointment which had made many of them despair either of power for themselves or of victory for their principles. In the autumn of 1810, the cloud descended upon the faculties of the King which was never completely removed. Mr. Perceval's Administration, following the example of Mr. Pitt, induced Parliament to confer a Regency, limited as to time and restricted as to power, on the Prince of Wales; and the Prince, angry because of the fetters thus imposed on him, made no secret of his intention, so soon as the Regency Bill was passed, of dismissing his father's Ministers and of sending for the chiefs of the Whig party. The Whigs were so confident of office that they actually made provisional arrangements for the distribution of power. The Prince's resolution, however, was never very constant. Symptoms which held out hopes of his father's recovery gave him an excuse for continuing the Tories in office; and he announced his intention in a letter to the Duke of York which is not likely to be forgotten while Mr. Moore's parody of it survives. The Duke of Bedford saw, with some soreness, that his own name was not included by his friends in the projected arrangements; and, perhaps from sharing his father's feelings, Lord John himself had very little patience with the conduct of his party.

Lord Holland tells me that you pay him the compliment of

[1] *History of Europe*, 2nd edition, 1826, vol. ii. p. 53.

saying that he is the only remaining Whig in England. I am sorry that you should exclude me from this honoured distinction.[1]

You are rather severe upon the late intended Ministers : perhaps you may be softened towards our friends if I tell you that *you* was [*sic*] proposed to be included in their arrangements. If Lord Grey had returned to the Foreign Office he proposed to entrust an important mission to Mr. Adair, who kindly offered to take you with him, in any capacity which the forms of office would admit of; but I told him that I thought a few months (or indeed a year or two) more with Mr. Playfair was very requisite before you commenced your diplomatic course.[2]

An effort has been made to trace the interests which occupied Lord John's attention at Edinburgh. But the session of the University hardly occupied six months out of every twelve, and the picture will not, therefore, be complete if something be not said of the manner in which Lord John passed his holidays. His long sojourn in Spain during 1808–9 had given him an enduring interest in the fortunes of the campaign. In 1810 he seems to have addressed a strong remonstrance to Lord Holland on a speech in which Lord Grey had declared that, if he had been Minister, he would not have sent an expedition to the Peninsula ;[3] and the interest which

[1] Duke of Bedford to Lord J. Russell, March 27, 1811.

[2] *Ibid.* Feb. 8, 1811. The arrangement was again contemplated in 1812, when Mr. Adair was once more thought of in connection with an important mission. Mr., afterwards Sir Robert, Adair was first cousin to the Duke of Bedford, his mother and the Duke's being sisters. It may be added that Lord John celebrated the reconstruction of Mr. Perceval's Ministry with a parody on the Witches' chorus in *Macbeth*.

Trouble, trouble, toil and trouble,
Honour 's smoke, and faith 's a bubble ;
Round the cauldron, sisters, turn,
And with its flame let Britain burn.

Twenty years later he himself appeared as one of the witches in one of Mr. Doyle's (H. B.'s) caricatures, saying :—

Round about the cauldron go,
In the Constitution throw.

[3] The speech to which Lord John alluded is apparently that reported in *Hans. Parl. Deb.* xvii. p. 598. Lord Holland thought it worth while replying in four closely written sheets to a letter which he did not like the less for being warm ; especially as warmth in the cause of liberty is easily cooled, but coldness is not very readily thawed.

he was thus taking in the progress of the war was increased by the circumstance that his brother had become one of the combatants. Lord William Russell had embarked with his regiment for the Peninsula in the summer of 1809. He was present at Talavera, where he was wounded and narrowly escaped being made a prisoner;[1] and in the following year he was appointed aide-de-camp to Sir Thomas Graham,[2] who commanded the garrison at Cadiz, at that time closely besieged by the French. Lord John decided on employing his summer holidays in 1810 in paying his brother a visit. At four in the morning on August 30 he left Plymouth in the 'Latona,' a fine 38-gun frigate lately fitted up as a troop ship. On September 12 he reached Gibraltar.

'At the Governor's house I saw some proclamations to be distributed amongst the French army, offering a reward in the name of the Governor to all deserters, French or otherwise, which seems to be both unlawful and impolitic, for I cannot understand how it can be just to entice away the troops that serve the enemy, or how it can be profitable to show your own troops the honour and emolument to be acquired by desertion. Late in the evening we set sail for Cadiz, and arrived there at two o'clock upon Sunday, the 16th. Upon landing I found General Graham, and I went with him to dine at Mr.

[1] Lord John said that at Talavera the cavalry, consisting of the 23rd Dragoons and a German regiment, was ordered to charge two divisions of the enemy's infantry, moving up on the English left. Between the two armies was a very large hollow or ditch too wide to leap. The 23rd crossed it with some confusion. The German colonel, when he came to the hollow, exclaimed, 'I will not kill my young men,' and led his regiment back. In the meanwhile the 23rd, passing between the enemy's columns, 'sustained a very heavy fire. A captain and a considerable number of privates were made prisoners; the rest of the regiment turned round and galloped back as fast as they could; among them my brother, being accosted by a French officer with the word "Prisonnier," replied "Pas encore," and, clapping spurs to his horse, had a desperate struggle for life. He was wounded in the side; a bullet struck his cloak, which was strapped behind him, and two more bullets struck his horse in the neck and head. However, he got back, and did not long suffer from the wound. This,' Lord John goes on to say with reference to a visit which he paid to the battle-field in 1813, 'was the part of the field which I was anxious to examine. But, though I found a spot answering the description, I cannot be at all sure that it was the identical hollow way through which the English and Irish dragoons dashed so madly, and at sight of which the German colonel so prudently halted.'

[2] Sir T. Graham is better known by his later title of Lord Lynedoch.

Wellesley's.[1] . . . I stayed at General Graham's house, excepting a few visits to Cadiz, till October 22.

The diary proceeds with a detailed account of the arrangements for the defence, and does not enter into politics. But, as the following letter will show, Lord John was taking a warm interest in the proceedings of the Cortes.

Isla,[2] October 6, 1810.

My dear Father,—You will perhaps be surprised to find that the packet brings this letter instead of me; but notwithstanding I mean to be in England by the end of October. But I find so much amusement here, and so much interest in the Cortes, that I cannot agree to leave this place to-morrow.

The Cortes are the only moving creatures here at present. They are still going on well but slowly. The members are very zealous and independent, for they are yet too unrefined to admit rotten boroughs. They have appointed a finance committee, and the general wish seems to be to reform the old abuses and establish a limited monarchy. The institutions and forms of England are much quoted. The greatest danger to be feared was a love of concealment, and, indeed, of popular clamour; but some of the members spoke so strongly on this subject that they have agreed to have the House open the greater part of their sitting. A victory in Spain would make the session safe for the winter, and next year the Spaniards themselves may make a figure in war as great as they did before despotism weakened their arms. . . . William desires his love to you.

Your affectionate son,

J. RUSSELL.[3]

The promise to return was not fulfilled. As October was drawing to a close, Lord John ascertained that two officers,

[1] Mr. H. Wellesley, afterwards Earl Cowley, who had succeeded Lord Wellesley as our representative in Spain.

[2] *i.e.* Isle de Leon at Cadiz.

[3] I am not writing a life of Lord W. Russell, but I cannot resist adding that young gentleman's postscript to his brother's letter.

'My dear Father,—John has told you all the news, so I will be silent. There were two pointer puppies sent to Woburn for me by Capt. Todd; they are a famous Spanish breed, remarkable for the excellence of the nose, so I will thank you to order they may be taken great care of, and well broke. I think there will be some amusement here soon. My love to all, and believe me affectionately yours,

'G. W. R.'

Captains Stanhope and Walpole,[1] were ordered to carry despatches to Lisbon.

They proposed to me to accompany them, and the offer was too tempting to allow me to decline it. The commander of a gun-brig gave us a passage, which proved a very stormy one, to Faro in the province of Algarve. The next day we got mules and had a pleasant and amusing journey of some days towards Lisbon. . . . On the day following our arrival at Lisbon, we continued our ride to General Hill's head-quarters. A high and precipitous range of cliffs, reaching nearly to the Tagus, was furnished with batteries and protected this part of the lines, which have since been known by the name of Torres Vedras. General Hill was on the extreme right, as Torres Vedras was near the extreme left, of the position. The village of Alhandra lay immediately below the cliffs I have mentioned, and it had been intended that the village should be left to the French. But, as it was completely commanded by the guns of our batteries, General Hill thought it best to retain possession of the village and to throw up abattis on the high road immediately beyond it. I rode into the village with General Hill on the morning after our arrival at his head-quarters. On the same day we pursued our road along the tops of mountains and through deep valleys to the head-quarters of the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Arthur Wellesley. These were situated in a small village at some distance from the great fort of Sobral, which formed the centre of the position. I had never before seen our great commander, and I was much struck with his piercing eyes and eagle countenance, which gave assurance of vigour and capacity. He welcomed us all, and told us that he was hand and glove with the French. . . . I was furnished with a room and with a bedstead, but with no bedclothes, so I slept in my cloak and did not pass the night very comfortably; but, at all events, the night was not long, for at four in the morning we breakfasted, and immediately after set out . . . to ride to Sobral, where Sir Arthur went every morning to observe the enemy, and where he generally passed the greater part of the day. Leaving the general and his staff to their occupations, my companion and I rode for some miles along the left of the position. . . We returned to head-quarters to a late dinner; and, if I recollect right, after one day more of stay with our general, I went alone to Lisbon and embarked in the packet for England. In less than a fortnight afterwards, dining at Holland House, I had the pleasure of telling Lord Grey, who thought the French were in

[1] Captain James H. Stanhope, third son of the third Earl Stanhope, and Captain John Walpole, fourth son of the second Earl of Orford.

Alhandra, that I had traversed that village in company with General Hill.[1]

So ended Lord John's second visit to the Peninsula. His curiosity to see the lines of Torres Vedras did not much interfere with his return to Edinburgh; and so rapid were his movements, that he was both present and speaking at the Speculative Society on November 19. The information which he had obtained, and the observations which he had made at Cadiz, gave him the materials for his paper on the Proceedings of the Spanish Cortes which he read before that society in the following spring. But, though he returned from Spain sound in body, and with a mind enlarged by travel, his friends were probably a little alarmed at his restless eagerness to hurry off to the seat of war on every available opportunity; and possibly dreaded his proposing a new trip to the Peninsula as occupation for the long vacation of 1811. It was perhaps with a view of avoiding such a suggestion that, as early as March 7, 1811, his father opened out to him a different arrangement: 'And now, my dear John,' he wrote on that day—

let me talk to you about your summer plans, as I dare say that you and Mr. Playfair are somewhat impatient that I should come to a determination upon them. I will tell you fairly what my own wishes are, and then leave it to the Professor to accommodate them as well as he can to his own views and convenience. I should wish you to come to town with him when his business calls him here, and, as soon as the Professor has concluded his business in town, I confess it would be a great satisfaction to me if he could bring it within his arrangements to make a tour with you through the manufacturing towns of England. You might employ with great advantage a few weeks in visiting the interesting and busy scenes of Birmingham, Manchester, Nottingham, Sheffield, the great commercial mart at Liverpool, &c., and leave the Professor at Leeds thus far on his way to the north for his summer vacation, when you might return to Woburn, and pass two or three months pleasantly with me (for I

[1] From a memo. dictated to Lady Russell in 1869. There is a similar account in *Recollections and Suggestions*, adding that in the following autumn 'at Lord Grey's at Howick, I betted a guinea with his brother-in-law, Lord Ponsonby, that at that time next year Lord Wellington would still hold the lines of Torres Vedras. Lord Grey thought that I had made a foolish bet, but . . . at the end of the year Lord Ponsonby paid me my bet.' *Recollections and Suggestions*, p. 10.

should be sorry to give you up again for the whole summer), and prepare for your return to the seat of science by the commencement of the lectures in November.

Mr. Playfair and Lord John came together to London in June, the former writing beforehand to Miss Berry—

My intention was to have been in London in the beginning of May; it answers better, however, for Lord John Russell, who lives with me, and means to go to town at the same time, that the journey should be put off till June. Early in that month I hope to have the pleasure of seeing you in North Audley Street. I shall request to be permitted to introduce Lord John Russell to you; he is one of the most promising young men I have ever met with.

From London master and disciple proceeded together to Woburn, and, after a week's stay, set out on their projected expedition.

The history of the tour, under the title 'Russell's Three Weeks' Tour,' vol. 1 and vol. 2, is recorded in two large note books; the first of which had been given to its owner by Lieutenant-Colonel McDonald, Deputy Adjutant-General to his Britannic Majesty's forces, serving in Cadiz and the Island of Léon. The book had probably been intended for Lord John's Spanish and Portuguese Diary in 1810. The proceedings of 1810 were, however, recorded on loose sheets of paper; and the book was available for a description of British Industries in 1811.

Mr. Playfair and Lord John arrived at Warwick on Saturday, July 27. The 28th was devoted to the Castle, and the 29th to Kenilworth and Guy's Cliff, and in the evening the tourists dined with Dr. Parr—

a learned monster of the first order, a demigod in Greek, a mortal in philosophy, free in his political principles, despotic in conversation at his own table. He received us very kindly, and entertained us more like a lettered prince than a princely man of letters.

The tourists, after this, proceeded to Birmingham, Trentham, Northwich, Liverpool, Prescot, Manchester, Chatsworth, Matlock, Sheffield, and Leeds, examining the various industries at these different places, and Lord John recording an almost technical description of each of them in his diary.

These long accounts cannot be inserted in this book; but it may be of interest to set out a few extracts from Lord John's concluding observations.

There is a very great satisfaction in seeing the manufactures of England, arising from their allowed superiority. Foreigners can claim an advantage over us in almost every other species of sight . . . but our manufactures have a pre-eminence which none can dispute, and every machine we see . . . is a part of the glory and a source of the prosperity of England.

The first of the few remarks still to be made is the singular quantity of talent we found amongst the manufacturers. There was not one master manufacturer of Manchester or Leeds (for we scarcely saw any of what may be called the manufacturing nobility except in those places) that might not be set apart as a man of sense, and hardly any that, besides being theoretically and practically masters of their own business, were not men of general reading and information. . . . The common men employed in the manufactures are also a sharper and more reasoning people than the agricultural population. Being constantly employed on the same object, they acquire the whole of its theory; being much mixed, their knowledge is communicated; being much within doors, it is increased; though their bodies are less strong and able for military service, their minds become more pliable and adroit. . . . But, whilst the comparison of abilities is much to the advantage of the manufacturer, that of morals is as much in favour of the agriculturist. The people who resort to a manufacturing town are perhaps originally neither the most prudent nor the most honest of the community; and their children, accustomed from their infancy to be away from their parents, to work hard at an unwholesome trade, and to see many companions of various kinds, are not likely to learn habits of temperance, soberness, and chastity. . . .

. . . With respect to the permanence of our manufactures, it must be observed that the most savage decrees, though they may restrain commerce for a while, are not likely to effect their object for a long time. It is a good observation of Mr. Playfair's that the activity and perseverance of mankind are continually defeating the folly and caprice of their governors. All the power of the French Emperor is not likely either to supply wants or to prevent their being satisfied. . . . The exclusive system, though partly successful, cannot last long, and the strictness of a Custom House officer, like that of Danae, cannot be proof against a shower of gold.

With these observations Lord John closed an account of a tour which must have given him a rare insight into the con-

dition of manufacturing England. In the following autumn he returned to Edinburgh, remaining at the University during the winter, and the spring of 1812. His future plans were still uncertain. His father wrote to him on March 14—

> You expected that I should in my last letter have talked to you on your future plans; but you will be pleased to recollect that you have never answered nor noticed the letter I wrote to you on that subject when you went to Edinburgh in November. . . . As to the probable advantage attending your return to Mr. Playfair next year, I will communicate with him forthwith; but, as to your going to Cambridge, I can see no possible benefit likely to result from it, except you call the various excellencies attending the sciences of horse-racing, fox-hunting, and giving extravagant entertainments, an advantage, as these, I believe, are the chief studies of our youths at Cambridge.

In March 1812, therefore, the Duke was doubtful whether Lord John should return to Edinburgh in the autumn or not. While he was uncertain Lord John paid a visit at Kinneil, the country house of Mr. Dugald Stewart, and there addressed the following lines to his host :—

> To distant orbs a guide amid the night,
> To nearer worlds a source of life and light,
> Each sun, resplendent on its proper throne,
> Gilds other systems and supports its own.
> Thus we see Stewart, on his fame reclined,
> Enlighten all the universe of Mind;
> To some for wonder, some for joy appear,
> Admired when distant, and beloved when near.
> 'Twas he gave laws to fancy, grace to thought,
> Taught virtue's laws, and practised what he taught.

On leaving Scotland in 1812, Lord John went to London, where his 'stay was not at all pleasant; out of spirits myself, and other people disagreeable. The murder of Perceval seems to have touched them but little, and the approach of a change of Ministry a great deal.' At the end of the month he went down to Bedfordshire to drill with the militia, in which he had recently been appointed to a company. He wrote to his cousin Gertrude on June 4—

I have been here a week drilling with the local militia, and have certainly learnt something. I command the Light company.

In the same letter he goes on :—

I believe the plan of returning to Scotland is now given up, and I shall probably go to Sicily, etcetera, in three or four months. This will be pleasant.

Writing to the same correspondent on July 9, Lord John said that he expected 'to hear of a ship every day,'[1] and on July 28 he sent her a farewell letter from Portsmouth :—

We—meaning Mr. Clive, Bridgeman, and I—sail to Gibraltar when a fair wind arrives. But, as a fair wind is not so common here as a fair lady, we do not expect to get off soon. . . . What an acquisition it would be if I had you or your hand (not the honour of) in Greece to take views of the country, for we cannot one of us make wittingly either a straight or a crooked line. But, as I cannot have your pencil, I hope to have the advantage of your pen.[2]

And a fortnight afterwards he was on board the 'Pique' outward bound.

[1] In this letter Lord John announced the birth of his half-sister (the Duchess of Abercorn) in these words: 'You must have heard of the female added to our family. The Duchess is well, and the child beautiful. Would to God all children could keep their own, and then we should have all beauties, instead of which nine out of ten of grown people are remarkable for ugliness or nothing at all. The other little girl, Georgey [Mrs. Romilly], is really a beauty, and her face promises a thousand sonnets and five hundred odes.'

[2] At Portsmouth Lord John had an unexpected pleasure. 'Think of my astonishment at finding William land within two feet of me the day before yesterday. Graham, I am sorry to say, has nearly, if not quite, lost the sight of one eye, and looks wretched in the face. If he does not go back, which I hardly expect, William will stay at home and most probably join his regiment.' (As a matter of fact, Lord William returned to the Peninsula, and was aide-de-camp to the Duke of Wellington at Vittoria.) The Bridgeman mentioned in this letter was George Bridgeman, eldest son of the first, and afterwards second, Earl of Bradford. He has already been mentioned in this biography. Mr. Clive was the second son of the first Earl Powis, and grandfather of the present Lord Windsor.

CHAPTER III.

FOREIGN TRAVEL.

August 19, 1812, Lat. 43° 51′ N; Long. 11° 44′ 45″ W.—Yesterday I completed the twentieth year of my age, in a fine frigate, on my voyage to Cadiz, with a fair wind and an intention of travelling for my amusement through Sicily, Greece, and perhaps Egypt and Syria. Is there any situation happier?

So begins the new diary in which Lord John commemorates his fifth tour. It is contained in five manuscript volumes, in the last four of which the author has written the familiar line—

Forsan et hæc olim meminisse juvabit.

Yet the preface reminds the reader of that famous narrative, 'The Tramp Abroad.' Mark Twain set out to take 'a journey through Europe on foot,' and 'for private reasons took the express train' at Hamburg. Lord John was bound, with a fair wind, for Sicily, Greece, Egypt, and Syria; and he returned home fifteen months afterwards without visiting any of those countries.

We had already been eighteen days coming from Yarmouth Roads, and were somewhat tired of the voyage. In this state we heard from a Spanish schooner from Setubal, and an English merchantman from Vigo, that Lord Wellington had entered Madrid. The accounts we had before received from several quarters of a great victory near Salamanca[1] made the report extremely probable; and, being of sanguine tempers, we readily believed this extent of good fortune. We therefore determined to leave 'La Pique' and to go with four of her large convoy that were bound to Oporto. A schooner, called the 'Alert,' laden with iron, cheese, &c., agreed to take us.

[1] The battle of Salamanca was fought on July 22. Mr. Bridgeman, whose letters home have been privately printed, says that the travellers had heard reports of the victory before they left Portsmouth.

The old temptation had returned with a new opportunity; and abandoning Italy and Greece, Syria and Egypt, the friends decided on marching behind a victorious English army into the Spanish capital. Perhaps their enthusiasm might have been damped if they could have foreseen that they were destined to wander for ten months before they entered the gates of Madrid.

Before definitely setting out for Madrid, indeed, the tourists decided on making a short journey in Portugal, travelling due south, over a road which Lord John had followed with Lord Holland four years before, to Coimbra, and thence north-east by Busaco to Lamego. Travelling by unusual routes, the friends soon found that they had to submit to no ordinary discomforts, and Mr. Bridgeman, writing home to his mother, said :—

> We have been at a set of curious pigsties by way of inns, and such places as we have slept in you cannot even *imagine*; our beds and clothes are full of fleas, which will be our delightful companions till we return to England; I have thousands of bites about me.

Lord John was much too fully occupied in noticing the physical characteristics of the country through which he was passing,[1] the appearance and the manners of the people, and in examining the positions where Lord Wellington had either stood or fought, to pay any attention to such minor discomforts as fleas. In many of his journals there is evidence that he had constantly to submit to poor accommodation and bad food. In none of them is there a word of complaint or repining at doing so.

It was in this short journey, occupying a little less than a fortnight, that Lord John spent the night at Arrouca, which deserves a passing reference in his biography.

> After a long descent the town of Arrouca and its large convent burst immediately upon us, and we arrived there and delivered to a monk belonging to a monastery opposite our letter to the Abbess. In a short time we had notice that she would see us; and we were taken to the grate and seated. She soon appeared—an old lady (not

[1] Mr. Playfair's influence is perceptible throughout the journal of 1812 by the constant reference to the geological characteristics of the country.

less, I should think, than eighty) of good manners and great apparent authority. [The next morning] we breakfasted with the lady Abbess, and I formed an acquaintance with a nun who had been handsome, and not so long ago as many of the others. Her eyes and hair were still good. After breakfast we went to see the church, which is very magnificent. . . A very pretty nun, twenty-five years of age, but seemingly very ill, was brought down by the one I have before mentioned. Her dark eyes were very fine, and her complexion pretty, but her mouth and teeth did not correspond. Her manners were pretty and graceful, and we learned she had been eight years in the convent. She had on a white veil well put on.

The white veil lingered in Lord John's memory for ten years, and his imagination, founding a romance on the wearer's pale face and dark eyes, wove out of these slender materials the slender tale 'The Nun of Arrouca.'

On September 10 the three friends concluded their preliminary tour by returning to Oporto. On the following day Marshal Beresford arrived at the town, and his arrival became the signal for general festivities. On the succeeding evening Lord John was introduced to him at the theatre.

The playhouse is a very pretty one, a much prettier one than there is in London. The play was a miserable translation from Kotzebue, and there followed three very long addresses to the Marshal, praising his valour in prose and verse.

On the following day Lord John dined with the Marshal, 'who gave us a very good dinner, at the expense of his host, with Portuguese profusion and English taste.' On the 13th he dined at Mr. Croft's 'with a large party invited to meet the Marshal, and went afterwards to a ball at Señor Pamplona's.' On the 14th they dined with General Trant, and went to a ball at the English factory house; and, on the 16th, having in the meanwhile secured, not without difficulty and expense, the necessary mules, Lord John and his friends set out on their journey to Madrid.

The road which the friends pursued did not lead them directly to the Spanish capital. Instead of following the course of the Douro, they struck in the first instance due north, to Braga, Ponte da Lima, and down the Minho to Caminha. Thence they wound their way back to Braga by

the coast road through Viana, crossed the bridge of Salamonde, over which Soult had retreated, and, after visiting Chaves and Bragança, reached the Spanish frontier at Villarino, and arrived on the field of Salamanca on October 8. The field of Arapiles (as Lord John calls it) was not a pleasant sight.

> Many bodies were lying about . . . and we saw in some places, where the people had attempted to burn [? them], a number of seared carcasses intermingled with one another—some much burnt, and others with the skin entire upon the ribs and hands. A number of vultures were collected on the field. They had entirely devoured the flesh of the horses, and were now busily employed upon the men. In one part they had torn up the bodies that were buried.

Lord John was not depressed by this horrid spectacle.

> I have not seen a more interesting sight than the field of Arapiles. The importance of the battle, the victory of our countrymen, the event, yet new upon our minds, made me look with an uncommon curiosity at the ground. The blood spilt on that day will become a real saving of life if it become the means of delivering Spain from French dominion.

Whatever interests, however, the field of Arapiles may have had for Lord John and his friends, they had no intention of remaining with the dead while there was active work doing by the living. Two days after their visit to the battlefield they followed the route by which Lord Wellington had already pursued the beaten French army. They reached Valladolid on the 14th, and Lord Wellington's headquarters at Villatoro, near Burgos, on October 19.

Unconsciously the friends had suddenly thrown themselves into a most critical position in the crisis of the campaign. Two thousand French soldiers still held the castle of Burgos; a large French army was stretched along the north bank of the river on which Burgos is built; and, on the morning after Lord John's arrival, he himself witnessed from a high hill a heavy French column 7,000 or 8,000 strong, pushed forward to reconnoitre the position of the English. Towards evening the French were driven back, and Lord John returned to headquarters and dined with the Commander-in-Chief.

Lord Wellington was in good spirits: said we should have had the castle with a few more guns, and that it was the strongest place he ever saw in his life. He said it was made on a plan pointed out by a Frenchman twenty years ago, by which there was a superior fire in every direction.

On the following morning Lord John rode out to the British outposts, a league beyond Burgos; in returning in the evening, he learned that the army was to retire, and that he and his friends must not sleep that night in the town. The news did not prevent their eating an excellent dinner. But, in the confusion of the subsequent retreat—

We got amongst a large brigade of mules, and the castle fired two or three shots over our heads. We next lost our way, but soon got back to the road. [After a night journey of three leagues to Estepar] we got into a large house, where there was a small place full of chopped straw, on which we three got a very good sleep.

Notwithstanding the retreat of the army, the travellers did not abandon all hope of wintering at Madrid: retracing their footsteps to Valladolid, they took the southern road to the Spanish capital; and, on the last day of October, after admiring the Roman aqueduct at Segovia, they entered San Ildefonso. Here

We were told that the French had entered, or were about to enter, Madrid. It may be imagined that we were not a little discomforted by this news, which so much clouded the brilliancy of our success, and, what was worse, deranged our own plans. However, as the information came from a muleteer, who got it from a peasant, we were not quite sure of our misfortune, and determined to follow our former plan and go to San Rafael.

There, however, the news of the continuous retreat of the British and of the fresh entry of the French into Madrid was confirmed; and the travellers had nothing for it but to turn westwards to Salamanca and then take the great road by Ciudad Rodrigo, Alcantara, Badajoz, and Xeres to Seville and Cadiz.

The three friends remained at Cadiz from the middle of December to the end of January 1813. During their stay Lord Wellington arrived in the town 'to concert with the

Government and the Cortes as to future measures.' His arrival was naturally the signal for great festivities.

Lord Wellington is here, and plays his part well to the Dons. He dines with the Regency to-day. But Infantado,[1] notwithstanding the Champagne and Burgundy he got at Woburn, has not asked me. Shabby fellow! It is clear he is unfit for the government of a great kingdom. The Duke of Ciudad Rodrigo[2] is not a bad figure here. He wears a blue hunting-coat at dinner with the embroidery of a Spanish captain-general and a star. The people here have received him coolly, but the grandee ladies are going to give him a grandee ball. The city of Cadiz, out of their great generosity, made him a speech to-day on his arrival. . . .

January 1.—I wish you a Happy New Year. We had a grand ball at the Ambassador's the day before yesterday, where I stayed till seven o'clock. The Lord was there in his hunting-coat and flirted with the Marchioness of Santa Cruz. My partner was her sister. . . . To-morrow there is a magnificent grandee ball, which is to cost 3,200*l.* We go from here to Malaga and Granada, then to Alicante and Sicily. Next winter I expect to be at Grand Cairo, if there is no plague in Egypt and the war still goes on in Europe.

In the beginning of 1813, therefore, the travellers were reverting to their original programme, and deciding, after a short stay in Spain, to go to Sicily, the East, and Egypt. On Wednesday, January 27, they left Cadiz, and crossed the field of Barrosa, where the bodies of the slain were still lying unburied. Lord John, who had an especial interest in the field on which his brother Lord William had been engaged, loitered a little behind his companions. A covey of partridges tempted him to wander from the track in the hope of getting a shot at them.

Failing in this object, I found I had lost my road, and the short twilight of Spain was rapidly turning into night. So I thought I had better go back and regain the village I had left. In crossing the river I missed the road by which I had come down, and found myself on the sands of a river with which I was not acquainted. I got off my little black pony, and walked before him in order to find my way; but suddenly he did not follow, and, on looking round, I discovered

[1] The Duc d'Infantado, a Spanish general, was at this time President of the Spanish Ministry. He had previously served as Spanish Minister in London.

[2] The Duke of Wellington's Spanish title.

to my horror that he had sunk in a quicksand, and nothing but his head and part of his neck was above the surface. I had no means of rescuing him from his helpless position, but fortunately soon reached the bank and was able to climb up to the village. I began to knock at the first door, but was told by a voice from inside . . . . 'I am the postman; I cannot leave the house.' At the next door I was answered, 'There is nobody but the married couple in the house; I cannot help you.' I then inquired from some one I met for the house of the Alcalde, and when I found him he presently collected some men with ropes and lanterns and we all set off down the road to the bank of the river. Here we presently found my unfortunate pony, and the men contrived to place their ropes under his body and lifted him up safe and sound. . . . The Alcalde gave me a billet in one of the best cottages, and I passed the night very comfortably. In the morning I set off on my road to Conil, where my friends had slept. They had wondered what had become of me, and were happy to see me again. I found that the river was a tidal river, and that the tide, in an hour or two more, would have covered my poor pony.[1]

Two days after this incident the friends reached Tarifa, and three days afterwards Gibraltar. They made the famous rock their headquarters from the last day of January to the last day but one of February, making, however, two excursions to Ceuta and Tetuan. On February 27 they left the Rock, intending to travel through South Eastern Spain to Malaga, Granada, Cordova, Cartagena, and Alicante—the point of embarkation for Sicily. The first part of this plan was duly carried out. They reached Malaga on the 3rd; Granada, where they spent a week, on the 9th; and Cordova on the 20th, March. But at Cordova brighter news from the army induced them to change their plans; and, instead of taking the direct road to the coast, they chose the high road to Madrid. Travelling steadily on, they reached La Mancha; and at the beginning of April went to see the great quicksilver mine at Almaden. Here, however, less favourable news reached them from the front; and Mr. Bridgeman and

[1] From a memo. dictated to Lady Russell in 1869. In the diary the only reference to the incident is, 'Near the river at Conil I got my horse in a quicksand. An honest peasant gave me a lodging for the night. His mother was ill, and I did not get a very fine room; but they were all very civil.'

Mr. Clive returned through Cordova to Granada with the intention of making their way to Alicante. Not so Lord John.

Finding the French did not continue the retreat [so wrote Mr. Bridgeman to his mother], John Russell, my strange cousin and your Ladyship's mad nephew, determined to execute a plan which he had often threatened, but it appeared to Clive and me so very injudicious a one that we never had an idea of his putting it into execution. However, the evening previous to our leaving Almaden, he said, 'Well, I shall go to the army and see William,[1] and I will meet you either at Madrid or Alicante.' We found he was quite serious, and he then informed us of his intentions. He said he should stay the next day at Almaden to sell his pony, and buy something bigger. He would not take his servant, but ordered him to leave out half a dozen changes of linen, and his gun loaded. He was dressed in a blue great coat, overalls and sword, and literally took nothing else except his dressing-case, a pair of pantaloons and shoes, a journal and an account book, pens and ink, and a bag of money. He would not carry anything to reload his gun, which he said his principal reason for taking was to sell, should he be short of money, for we had too little to spare him any. The next morning he sold his pony, bought a young horse, and rode the first league with us. Here we parted with each other with much regret, and poor John seemed rather forlorn. God grant he may have reached headquarters in safety and health, for he had been far from well the last few days he was with us. He returned to Almaden, there to purchase some leathern bags to carry his clothes, and he was to start the following morning. Clive and I feel fully persuaded that we shall see him no more till we return to England.[2]

Lord John's own account is much shorter :—

Sunday, April 4.—Clive and Bridgeman went off with the servants and mules towards Cordova, intending to proceed by Granada to Alicante. I separated from them, and took the road towards the English army, because I particularly wished to see my brother William, whom I supposed to be at this time arrived at headquarters. It were unnatural had I not felt it a severe blow to separate from friends with whom I had been so long.

Lord Wellington's headquarters, when Lord John com-

[1] Lord William had returned to Spain, and was serving on Lord Wellington's staff.

[2] Mr. Bridgeman s Letters, pp. 96, 97.

menced this remarkable journey, were at Frenida on the Portuguese frontier, some 150 miles from Almaden. To reach them it was necessary to cross two rivers, the Guadiana and the Tagus, and to pass the two mountain ranges which intersect the province of Estremadura. It was reported, moreover, at Almaden, and Lord John's companions believed, that French cavalry were still picketed on the banks of the Tagus. The journey was performed alone, or with any peasant whom he picked up as a guide. On April 16, however, it was safely accomplished; and Lord John rode into Frenida.

A very poor village. Lord Fitzroy Somerset furnished me with a bed, and everyone was very good-natured to me.

The next entry in his diary is as follows:—

Tuesday, May 25.—I pass over my long stay at headquarters, which was entirely time spent with Englishmen. On the 22nd Lord Wellington moved to Ciudad Rodrigo and on the 23rd to Tamames.

Two days afterwards Lord John parted from the army, turning towards Madrid. Years afterwards he spoke of this parting, thus:—

I left the Duke of Wellington's army on the march. . . They pursued the way to Vittoria, where they fought the famous battle of that name, and I always regret that my wish to see Madrid, and to rejoin my former companions, deprived me of the magnificent sight of that famous victory.

Yet there were sound reasons for his decision:—

Events were so doubtful that I did not like to go with him [Lord W. Russell] across the Douro. Lord Wellington told me that the French were likely to extend on this side, in which case I should have been completely cut off from Alicante; [besides] as I had no military character, I never liked to be a mere incumbrance on the operations of men whose whole days were occupied in the real business of war.

But, if he consequently missed the excitement of a great battle, the journey which he took was not without adventure and interest. When he left the army he was far from well—so ill, indeed, that he was delayed for some days at Plasencia; and, what was unusual with him, thought it necessary to

mention his illness again and again in his diary. Perhaps for this reason at Plasencia he engaged a servant, 'the worst-dressed and most foul-shinned scamp I ever saw.' Thenceforward his appearance was even more grotesque than before.

I wore a blue military cloak, and a military cocked hat; I had a sword by my side; my whole luggage was carried in two bags, one on each side of the horse. In one of these I usually carried a leg of mutton, from which I cut two or three slices when I wished to prepare my dinner. My servant had a suit of clothes which had never been of the best, and was then mostly in rags. He too wore a cocked hat, and, being tall and thin, stalked before me with great dignity.[1]

From Plasencia, after making a short détour to see the Monastery of Yuste, the retreat of Charles V., he proceeded to Talavera, where he carefully examined the battle field, endeavouring to trace the course of the charge in which his brother William had been wounded; thence he took the road to Toledo; and on June 5, only two days after the French had evacuated it, having made a circuit of the surrounding country, he at last entered the Spanish capital, 'and came through a very shabby street to a very dirty inn.'

Much is ruined and destroyed; but enough remains to show that it was a most magnificent little town. Although the French were here four years, the people have true Spanish feelings, and showed a joy at Lord Wellington's success, compared to which all London rejoicings are tame and flat.

While Lord John was thus accompanying Lord Wellington and riding to Madrid, his more cautious friends were carrying out their original plan and proceeding to Alicante. They reached Alicante on May 7, and stayed in that 'insufferable, stupid, filthy town'[2] for more than a month. The retreat of the French induced them to reconsider their arrangements and to rejoin Lord John, whom they hoped 'to keep steady in future.' They reached Madrid a fortnight after Lord John's

[1] It was at Plasencia that Lord John was the guest of the 'jolly, red-faced priest' who reproved him for not drinking more wine with the syllogism: 'Qui bene bibit, bene dormit; qui bene dormit, non peccat; qui non peccat, salvatus erit.'

[2] Mr. Bridgeman's Letters, p. 110.

arrival, and stayed there till July 17. Lord John wrote in his diary—

During the time I stayed at Madrid the news came of the victory of June 21 [Vittoria]. The joy it caused among all classes was a sight I had never known before. Every man, woman, and child was reading the gazette, or hearing it read, on the first day. Then came shouting, singing, dancing, and thanksgiving.

On the 17th of July they left Madrid in two caleches with two riding horses; and, after a fortnight's travel, they entered Valencia, where they were detained waiting for a ship till September 9. On that day they embarked on board

a fish vessel, master Captain Martin, who cheated us by taking 180 dollars for our passages. He sailed with a fine westerly breeze, but the ship was not the best of sailers.[1]

Bad as the vessel was, however, she brought them in three days to Palma, the chief port of Majorca, where, after a twenty-four hours' detention in quarantine, they were permitted to land and escorted to the Bishop's palace, 'prepared for the reception of our magnificent persons.' They remained in Majorca for nine days, when they crossed from Alendia to Minorca, landing in Ciudadela on the 22nd, and reaching Port Mahon on September 23. There the three friends again parted. Mr. Bridgeman and Mr. Clive, recurring to their original intention, went on to Sicily. Lord John, on the contrary, took advantage of a ship of war, 'The Espoir,' touching at Port Mahon, crossed to Tarragona, and thence, finding his way across Spain, returned to England.

Reasons for his return undoubtedly existed. On the 25th of the previous April, while Lord John was staying at Lord Wellington's headquarters near the Portuguese frontier, an event had occurred in England which was destined to influence the whole of his life. This event was the death of General Fitzpatrick, a gentleman who may be still recollected by a few persons as a politician and by a few others as a poet and a scholar, who has been mentioned in this memoir as

[1] Mr. Bridgeman, as usual, is more explicit. He wrote, 'The brig was a clumsy, bad sailer, and the master a great blackguard. We had a great deal of swell, and were all sick.'

a successful candidate for Bedfordshire in 1807, and who had been nominated member for the Duke of Bedford's borough of Tavistock in 1812. Lord Tavistock, the Duke's eldest son, was already member for Bedfordshire; Lord William, the second son, though he was serving as Lord Wellington's aide-de-camp in Spain, was member for Bedford; and the Duke resolved on making Lord John, his third son, member for the Devonshire borough. It was true that Lord John was still under age, and therefore ineligible for a seat in Parliament. Disqualifications of this kind had only slight influence with borough owners, who all acted on, if they did not claim, the right to do what they chose with their own. Lord Liverpool, moreover, the Prime Minister of 1813, was himself under age when first elected to the House of Commons. Mr. Fox, who was the pattern and example of all true Whigs, was under age when he was first elected for Midhurst; and Lord John's absence abroad made it certain that he would be neither expected nor required to make any inconvenient declaration for some time. Probably for all these reasons, and perhaps still more from a desire to push the fortunes of a favourite and promising son, the Duke ordered the electors of Tavistock to elect Lord John. The electors, of course, obeyed their patron's commands, and Lord John became consequently a member of Parliament.[1]

It is characteristic of Lord John that no mention of his election occurs throughout his diary. It was his business there, so he evidently thought, to record circumstances of public importance, not private matters affecting himself; and

[1] In introducing the second Reform Bill in 1831, Lord John gave the following account of Tavistock (where the franchise was vested in the freeholders). He said:—

'In that borough in 1716 there were 110 persons who polled at elections. Looking at the returns from thence, it appears that the family to which I belong very often returned a member; and the other member seems usually to have been a gentleman of the county. At some period, I really cannot tell exactly when, the Duke of Bedford, having great property in the neighbourhood, bought up the freeholds, and in time the constituency was so diminished that the electors varied only between twenty-seven and thirty-five. They [were] not entirely dependent, but still it will be seen that so small a number was much more within the verge of the influence of a great proprietor than the 110 voters would be who, a century earlier, assisted at elections.

in accounting for his second separation from his friends he merely stated—

Finding I must undergo forty days' quarantine if I went on to Sicily, I gave it up and resolved to come home.

But Mr. Bridgeman, writing three months afterwards, says—

I was astonished to see John's arrival in England about three weeks after he left us at Mahon. He flew home, on what wings I know not, but I suppose on those of political ambition.[1]

The journey occupied a longer time than Mr. Bridgeman imagined. Lord John left Port Mahon on September 26, and he did not sail from Coruña for England till October 27. In the intermediate period, however, he probably contrived to see as much of interest as many mortals succeed in witnessing in a long series of years. He sailed from Port Mahon in the 'Espoir,' a brig of war commanded by Captain Spencer,[2] touched the Spanish coast at Barcelona on the 29th, breakfasting there with Captain Adam on board the 'Invincible;' and, after a three days' visit to Admiral Hallowell's flagship, 'the Malta,' landed at Tarragona and became the guest of Lord Frederick Bentinck[3] at Reus. On Tuesday, October 5, in company with Mr. Locker,[4] he left Reus with hired mules for Saragossa. The marks of the famous siege were still everywhere visible.

The country houses, the convents, the suburbs on the Ebro are reduced to a few roofless walls, penetrated in a thousand places by cannon and musket balls. . . But when we got into the Calle Coso[5] our astonishment was much increased at seeing that every house

[1] Mr. Bridgeman's Letters, p. 185.

[2] Afterwards Captain Sir Robert Spencer, K.C.H., Lord Spencer's second son.

[3] Captain, afterwards Admiral Sir C., Adam, was the second son of the Right Hon. W. Adam. General Lord Frederick Bentinck was the fourth son of the third Duke of Portland.

[4] Mr. Locker was Public Secretary to the Mediterranean Fleet. He was carrying despatches to Lord Wellington on this occasion.

[5] The Calle Coso, or Calle del Coso, is the chief street in Saragossa. Mr. Locker Lampson tells me, on the authority of his father's diary, that 'the walls that separated the houses had been pulled down, and the long street had been converted into two immense forts.'

was like a sieve; doors, windows, and walls all being penetrated by musketry.

Mr. Locker and he stayed at Saragossa till October 13, and then proceeded by Tudela and Pampeluna to Lord Wellington's headquarters at Vera.

On the 20th I went with Lord William to the Highland Brigade. The high hill of La Rune, which rises above here, is visible from a great distance. On it is a stone to mark the boundary of France and Spain. On Sunday, the 24th, I rode along the line to Irun, and dined with Lord Waldegrave. On Monday I went to Passage, where Sir G. Collier treated me very kindly, and sailed on the 27th in the packet for England.

Perhaps no sight could have been more imposing than that on which Lord John thus gazed. From the high ground, over which he rode with his brother, his eyes must have travelled over the rich and varied scenery of Southern France, while, as he said himself in his 'Recollections and Suggestions'—

I could not but feel admiration and joy on beholding the General, whom I had visited in a critical position, defending with difficulty the capital of Portugal, now advancing in command of an admirable army to the invasion of France.[1]

Parliament met on November 4, only eight days after Lord John left Passage. The session which then began continued till the end of the following July; and on two occasions only is Lord John reported to have broken silence. On

[1] *Recollections and Suggestions*, p. 15. The following song, which Lord John wrote (in the character of a Spaniard), is a recollection of the ladies of the land in which, at various times, he had spent so many months:—

Love shall not here in England
Enchain me with his fetter;
For I have in my own land
Loves that I love better.
The women here in England
Are fair as any lily,
But I who come from sunny lands
Have found them somewhat chilly.
The women here in England
Are graceful, tall, and slender,
But others in my own land
Have hearts more soft and tender.
The women of my own land
Are somewhat pale and sallow,
But then the rose that I prefer
Is certainly the yellow.
The women here in England
Know botany, astronomy,
German, French, Italian, and
Political economy.
The women of my own land
Can scarcely spell a letter;
But then their mirth 's so unconstrained
I love them all the better.

the first of these, he is stated to have opposed the proposal of Ministers to enforce the union of Norway and Sweden; but his arguments are not given in 'Hansard.' On the second of them he opposed the renewal of the Alien Acts, which had been in force throughout the war, and which enabled the Secretary of State to exercise a close supervision over aliens, and even to remove them from the country. Lord John wound up the short debate on the second reading of the Bill.

He considered the Act to be one which was very liable to abuse. The present time was that which least called for it; and Ministers, in bringing forward the measure now because it had been thought necessary before, reminded him of the unfortunate wag mentioned in Joe Miller, who was so fond of rehearsing a joke that he always repeated it at the wrong time.[1]

Such is the full report of Lord J. Russell's speech. His sally may have caused a laugh; it did not influence the result. The Alien Act of 1814, like its many predecessors, became law.

Not much interest attaches to these early speeches. And perhaps, so far as Lord John Russell is concerned, there is more significance in an event which happened in Bond Street than in either of the two speeches which he made in the House of Commons. For, in 1814, he became a member of Grillion's Club.[2]

It has been the good fortune of Grillion's that, from its first formation, it has embraced the foremost men on both sides of politics. The statesmen opposed to one another in Parliament have met at its table; and the asperities of political warfare have been smoothed by the easy and pleasant friction of social converse. Lord John was a frequent attendant at its meetings; and, though the older members of the club hesitate to publish the many good stories which they tell and retell in private, some of them could recount how 'Johnnie,' as he was almost universally called, after he had ripened

[1] *Hansard*, xxvii. 862, and xxviii. 715.

[2] The late Sir Philip Egerton wrote a short account of Grillion's Club (for private circulation). From that book I find that in 1844 Lord John, having been thirty years a member, was invited to become an honorary member. He must therefore have joined the club in 1814.

into the full dignity of a Cabinet Minister, was one of the leading actors in at least one scene of boisterous good humour.

Lord John was not in London when Parliament re-assembled. The air of Southern Europe was preferable to the atmosphere of Westminster; and, like a bird of passage, he had again spread his wings for a long flight to the South.

Leghorn, December 4, 1814.—After five weeks spent on the sea and in a Lazzaret, you may suppose that we return to the habitations of men with a greater appetite than is usual to travellers newly arrived in Italy.

Thus Lord John commenced the new diary which he opened on his arrival in Italy, and the same reflection again occurred to him on reaching Florence.

I shall hardly be safe in describing the beauties of this place; for, to those who have spent six weeks between a sea voyage and a Lazzaretto, every object has a colour much richer than to ordinary travellers; so that, whilst many of the English here are complaining, some of the cold, some of the wet, some of the journey, and almost all of the inns, I listen with great satisfaction and unconcern to their lamentations.

His stay at Florence was, however, only short.

On the 17th I left Florence with Mr. Whitmore[1] and Captain Adye of the 'Partridge.' We went to Lucca, visiting this place in our way to Leghorn.

For an opportunity such as falls to the lot of few men, and such as Lord John himself had not hitherto enjoyed, had arisen. Napoleon was detained at Elba, and to Elba Lord John was bending his way.

More than fifty years afterwards, in November 1868, Lord John wrote to M. Van de Weyer an account, which was privately printed, of the interview which he then had with the Emperor. More interest, however, naturally attaches to the narrative which he wrote at the time.

Porto Ferrajo, December 25, 1814.—At eight o'clock in the evening yesterday, I went to the Palace according to appointment to see

[1] Mr. Whitmore was the husband of Lord John's cousin, Lady Lucy Bridgeman.

Napoleon. After waiting some minutes in the ante-room I was introduced by Count Drouot, and found him standing alone in a small room. He was dressed in a green coat, with a hat in his hand, very much as he is painted; but, excepting the resemblance of dress, I had a very mistaken idea of him from his portrait. He appears very short, which is partly owing to his being very fat; his hands and legs being quite swollen and unwieldy. That makes him appear awkward, and not unlike the whole-length figure of Gibbon the historian. Besides this, instead of the bold-marked countenance that I expected, he has fat cheeks, and rather a turn-up nose, which, to bring in another historian, makes the shape of his face resemble the portraits of Hume. He has a dusky grey eye, which would be called vicious in a horse, and the shape of his mouth expresses contempt and decision. His manner is very good-natured, and seems studied to put one at one's ease by its familiarity; his smile and laugh are very agreeable; he asks a number of questions without object, and often repeats them, a habit which he has no doubt acquired during fifteen years of supreme command. To this I should also attribute the ignorance he seems to show at times of the most common facts. When anything that he likes is said, he puts his head forward, and listens with great pleasure; . . . but when he does not like what he hears, he turns away as if unconcerned, and changes the subject. From this one might conclude that he was open to flattery and violent in his temper.

Lord John was with the Emperor an hour and a half, conversing on many subjects—the Russell family, Lord John's own allowance from the Duke, the state of Spain and Italy, the character of the Duke of Wellington, and the arrangements likely to be made at Vienna for the pacification of Europe. He used to say in his old age that, as the Emperor became interested in his conversation, he fell into the singular habit which he had acquired, and pulled him by the ear. Two days afterwards Lord John left Elba for Civita Vecchia and Rome. But amidst the interests of the Eternal City he unfortunately omitted to continue his diary, and only resumed it, some weeks afterwards, at Terracina on the road to Naples. On Tuesday, February 7, he left Naples for Pæstum, stopping at Pompeii, where he made the characteristic observation that 'everyone was slain in his vocation—the rich man carrying away his money, the priests eating, and

the soldiers entertaining a woman.' After leaving Pompeii, Lord John thought the descent to Salerno 'one of the most magnificent views I ever saw.' On arriving at Pæstum, he described one of its temples as 'the most perfect specimen of Greek architecture that I have had the luck to see;' and, on his return to Rome, he was delighted with Frascati and Tivoli.

On March 28, 1815, Lord John 'left Rome, not without regret; . . it is a dull place, but full of inspirations which come athwart its habitual gloom and make it interesting.' Lord John took the road to Sienna and Florence, which he reached on April 1; and, after only a two days' stay, went on to Bologna.[1] His route then lay through Modena, Parma, Milan, Verona, Venice, Padua; across the Brenner to Innspruck, by Stuttgart and Mannheim to Mayence, down the Rhine to Coblentz and Bonn; and so through Aix, Brussels, and Ghent to Ostend and England.

This journey, like many of the journeys which Lord John Russell took in his youth, is accomplished annually now by hundreds, or thousands, of Englishmen. In 1814, the Continent had been closed by war, and the conditions of travel made the grand tour only possible to rich men. Lord John's homeward journey, moreover, derived an additional interest from the circumstances of the time in which it was undertaken. For Napoleon, in March, having escaped from Elba, landed in France; and his return, prompted on his part by 'un peu d'espoir et beaucoup de désespoir,'[2] animated some struggling nationalities with hope, and filled some baffled statesmen with despair.

[1] It may be of interest to insert Lord John's views of art in 1815. 'The School of Painting of Bologna is very ancient and famous. . . . Ludovico Caracci restored it, and founded the school so well known of his cousins Guido, Guercino, Albano, and Domenichino. Except Raphael, there is nothing in the Roman school to compare to these names, and each excels him in one department. Guido is my favourite. His colouring is bad; but he has a noble and a simple manner. Perhaps I like him because he is more easily understood by an ignorant person.'

[2] The phrase is Count Mosbourg's, a Minister of Murat, and is quoted by Lord John in his letter to Mr. Van de Weyer giving an account of his interview with Napoleon. It has recently been requoted by Mr. Clayden in his *Rogers and his Contemporaries.*

In Italy the feeling was in Napoleon's favour. At Sienna, on the last day of March, Lord John went into

the Casino of the Nobili, where they were all very animated about the news. One man spoke very eloquently on the miserable condition of Italy, which felt every convulsion of Europe directly, but was not considered in the wise arrangements of the high and mighty allies.

Two days afterwards he records at Florence a rumour that

The Neapolitans had entered Bologna—great alarm among the English. Rogers off in a hurry, all the horrors of captivity in his face.

And when he reached Bologna—

He found the town in a great state of joy without any riot. Joachim Murat had two days before proclaimed the independence of Italy. The people here hate the Germans for many reasons. . . . Owing to these causes, many volunteers (2,000, they say) have appeared; and the few scholars left in the University all took up arms at the command of their professor, probably very glad to get rid of his lectures.

On his arrival at Modena he found that 'there had been fighting all day, and much confusion.' But on April 12 he writes—

The Neapolitan troops went out last night without doing any mischief. A German picquet came in about eight in the morning; a division soon after followed, received with loud huzzas by the people, who, however, seem to me to have their minds sufficiently free from any bias to take the side of the strongest. The Grand Duke popular.

And in closing his diary in Italy, he writes—

The French Government, though not good, very useful to prepare the people for a better; the Austrians dull, sleepy, and perhaps as arbitrary; the French by far the best liked of the two, as they are gay and spend their money. Napoleon is respected by all. Of course there is a party for, and a party against him, but I believe the former the strongest. Every man is for himself; there is no national feeling, and nobody to head it if there were. The plea of a federative government, if supported by England, would have partisans.

On May 5 Lord John began the 'very long and tedious' ascent of the Brenner, and turned his back upon Italy. Three days afterwards–

I struck into Germany, which I passed through after the traveller's usual manner, without knowing anything of the people, language, or history. Only observed that the race was entirely different from the Italian. Alehouses instead of confectioners, hardware instead of books, whitewashed small country houses instead of large architectural palaces, cleanliness instead of taste, and honest sulkiness instead of roguish vivacity. 'L'homme est méchant et misérable,' says Bayle, but not universally—'méchant' in the south, 'misérable' in the north.

Though Lord John only crossed the Brenner on May 5, he was speaking in the House of Commons on June 5, and protesting against the new war, 'which he declared to be impolitic in its origin, unjust in its object, and injurious in its consequences.' His protest did not, of course, affect the issue. Ministers succeeded in obtaining the supplies which they sought, and their chosen chief, by his famous victory, gave enduring peace to Europe. The session was rapidly concluded, and Parliament separated without having a further opportunity of listening to Lord John Russell's eloquence.

The story of Lord John Russell's life has now been brought down to a distinct halting-place. With the commencement of the following session he was destined to take a more active part both in politics and literature. The boy had ripened into the man, and the business of his life was thenceforward to be more serious. Yet it is worth while, before closing this chapter, to review the incidents which have already been related. An attempt has been made to give a picture of a delicate boy gradually increasing in strength, but whose weakness interfered with the usual routine of education. We have seen him at a bad private school at Sunbury, for a few months enduring the rough life of a fag at Westminster, for some years living with a private tutor in Kent, and with Professor Playfair in Edinburgh. At these various places he acquired a knowledge of a good deal of Latin, and of a little Greek, and some acquaintance with mathematical and physical sciences. Yet, so far as education goes, his furniture was unusually defective. He had no pretensions to be called a scholar. His knowledge was, in fact, the exact reverse of that which an ideal scholar is said to

possess. Instead of being so intent on the trees as to neglect the forest, he was so occupied with the forest that he knew too little about the trees. He read his Virgil and his Homer as he read his Dryden and his Young, and did not suffer his attention to be diverted from their thoughts and language to a study of the Greek digamma.

Yet, if he had not much pretensions to exact knowledge, his reading was wider than that of most of his contemporaries; and he had not merely a large acquaintance with authors of many nations, he had thought on what he read. His mind, too, had been enlarged by intercourse with superior men, and by the opportunities of foreign travel. Few men of his age, standing on the threshold of a career, had seen so much that was worth seeing. He had knowledge of every division of the United Kingdom. In London he had breakfasted with Mr. Fox, he was a frequent guest at Lord Holland's dinner-table, he was acquainted with all the prominent leaders of the Whig party, he had already become a member of Grillion's Club. In Dublin he had seen all that was best in society; in Edinburgh he had mixed with all that was best in letters. He had already made the acquaintance of Mr. Moore in one capital; he was on terms of intimacy with Mr. Jeffrey in the other. He had dined with Mr. Parr at Birmingham, with Bishop Watson on Windermere; he had walked with Sir Walter Scott along the banks of the Tweed, and he had passed a night in the poet's home at Ashestiel. He had travelled through the highlands of Scotland, and had carefully examined the great manufacturing industries of England. Abroad, his opportunities had been even greater. He had read his Camoens in Portugal, his Tasso in Italy; he had traversed the Italian Peninsula from Naples to Venice; he had journeyed through the length of Spain; he had ridden with the Duke of Wellington along the lines of Torres Vedras; he had watched a French advance in force in the neighbourhood of Burgos; he had gazed from a British position near La Rune over Southern France. He had conversed with Napoleon in Elba; and he had hurried home to denounce in his place in the House of Commons the inception of a new war. Was there

another man in England, who had not completed the twenty-third year of his age, who had seen so much and who had done so much as Lord John Russell? His desultory education had been appropriately ended by his leaving Edinburgh without taking a degree. But the deficiency had been amply repaired. He had graduated in the University of the World.

The following lines from an undated essay on Vanity were, there is reason to believe, written in 1813,[1] and will explain Lord John's sentiments at the opening of his career :—

> To study man, God's last and greatest work,
> To trace the feelings that in silence lurk,
> Stand in the midst, and hear and see the storm
> Profoundly roar, and hideously deform ;
> To mark each passion with its kindred rave,
> Cloud roll on cloud, and wave encounter wave,
> 'Till some vast genius waken from his sleep,
> Speak to the winds, and stalk upon the deep,
> Be mine. Let Stoics at a jest be grave,
> Alone in crowds, and cheerful in a cave ;
> May I not live to tread the earth alone,
> But blend some other fortune with my own :
> The smallest pearl, when in a necklace set,
> Has gained a value from the pearls it met.
> Thus in man's path of life may I have power
> To smooth one rougher plant or single flower ;
> And if but once my cares can give delight
> If to the stock of joys I add my mite,
> If to my heirs I can entail a name
> That all my line may honourably claim ;
> If to my God my heart be alway true,
> If tears of man my mouldering grave bedew,
> Then life in glory ages shall renew.
> But if to me is placed so hard a doom,
> As quiet life and unfrequented tomb,
> Yet would I seek to strive with Nature's laws,
> Join fact to fact, ascend from cause to cause

[1] The poem from which these lines are taken is in an undated MS. book. The six last lines were afterwards copied—in the form in which they appear in the text—into another MS. book, and dated 1813. The four last lines were published in *The Nun of Arrouca*.

. . . . . ,

But, if for these high mysteries unfit—
So cold my fancy, or so weak my wit—
Yet still in listless pleasure could I lie,
Drink the pure stream, bless the unclouded sky;
Read Nature's works; nor ever feel a care,
While 'mid the souls I love, I breathe the morning air.
But if for me, by sad decree of fate,
Sorrow impends, alone I'll bear the weight;
Then be my heart like ocean, common road
For all, but only for the dead abode.
Man shall not sound the deep o'er which he steers,
And none shall count its treasures or its tears.

CHAPTER IV.

POLITICS AND LITERATURE.

THERE are few subjects which are perhaps less perfectly understood than the condition of England at the close of the great war in 1815. The student, gazing backward over the long intervening years, is arrested by the vision of a great triumph. Those, however, who were on the stage at the time heard the shout of triumph drowned by the wail of suffering, and saw the sunshine of victory obscured by a cloud of sorrow.

While the war lasted three causes, different in their character, produced either the semblance or the reality of prosperity. (1) The superiority of the British at sea gave them a predominance in trade, which tended to develop the native and colonial industries of the empire; (2) the vast expenditure of the Government, forestalling the accumulations of future generations, created fictitious demands for labour; and (3) an inconvertible currency, established by the Bank Restriction Act of 1797, raised prices to an unprecedented level, and provoked an appetite for speculation. A period of high prices is always advantageous to the landed classes. The landowners of 1815 found themselves in a position of affluence, and were able to raise the price of labour by increasing their own expenditure.

These conditions were abruptly terminated by the peace of 1815. The Act of 1797 had stipulated that payments in cash should be resumed six months after the conclusion of peace. In consequence, the price of gold fell rapidly from the artificial level to which an inconvertible currency had forced it. The price of every other article fell with the decrease in its value. The whole complicated operations of trade were affected by a universal fall of prices, and the creditor was everywhere benefited at the expense of the debtor. No body of persons suffered so severely from this crisis as the class

which was dependent on land. Tempted by the prospect of high prices, landlords had everywhere been spending money on the improvement of their estates, and on the enclosure of inferior land. These improvements had commonly been made on borrowed money. The fall of prices reduced their rental, but the charges on their property remained unchanged. There was indeed every apparent probability that the resumption of specie payments would compel them to pay in gold the interest on a debt which they had contracted to pay in paper, and the difference between the intrinsic value of gold and the value of paper towards the close of the war was a difference of very nearly 30 per cent.

The fall in prices, which would have resulted in any event from the prospect of a resumption of specie payments, was accelerated by the reduction in the military and naval expenditure of the country. The agriculturists, suddenly confronted with a reduced demand for agricultural produce, found it necessary to retrench ; the easiest method of retrenching was to throw inferior land out of tillage, and to discharge their labourers. But these proceedings, however necessary they may have been, aggravated the general distress. Labourers discharged by the thousand were supported by the rates ; the existence of a vast amount of surplus labour led to a rapid fall in wages. When large numbers of redundant workmen are clamouring for food, the pressure of distress is sure to fall chiefly on the shoulders of the poor.

Miserable as the condition of the poor thus became, it was aggravated by measures which were probably unavoidable. Peace compelled the Government to discharge large numbers of soldiers and sailors. The condition of these men was deplorable. Wandering through the country, seeking work and finding none, they had the effect, which Irish immigration afterwards produced, of depreciating still further the value of labour. Without finding work themselves, their presence assisted to lower the rate of wages.

It may perhaps be thought that even these misfortunes, grave as they were, were partially redeemed by the lighter taxation consequent on the peace. But peace, following a prolonged struggle, does not produce the financial relief which

it might be expected to afford. A long war is almost necessarily conducted on borrowed money; and when peace has been proclaimed, the bill has to be paid.

So it was in 1816. The war had raised the debt to 860,000,000*l.*; the charge of it, including the sinking fund, to more than 46,000,000*l.* The charge of the debt at the conclusion of the war was more than twice the sum required for the whole expenditure of the State at the beginning of it.

It would have been strange if the conditions which have been thus related had not produced discontent, which was not the less grave because it required opportunity for articulate expression. The House of Commons at that time was composed of some 150 county members elected by the freeholders, and of some 500 borough members, the majority of whom were returned by private patrons. Neither county members nor borough members were in touch with a suffering people. The later policy of Mr. Pitt, moreover, which was adopted by his successors, prevented, or at any rate impeded, the expression of opinion. Mr. Pitt's Acts of 1795 declared that any person levying war upon the king in order to compel him to change his measures or counsels, or in order to intimidate either House of Parliament, should be guilty of high treason. They further declared that no meeting of more than fifty persons (except county and borough meetings duly called) should be held for considering petitions or addresses for alteration of matters in Church or State, or for discussing any grievance, without previous notice to a magistrate, who was to attend and control the meeting. These extraordinary powers were the more tremendous from the construction commonly placed on them by lawyers and judges. A serious riot became armed insurrection. If the riot grew out of a meeting which desired the removal of an existing Ministry, it amounted, so it was judicially affirmed, to a levying of war against the king.[1]

Such was the state of things in 1816. By birth and conviction a Whig, Lord John Russell sincerely desired its termination. It seemed to him that the right method of terminating it was by a vigorous attack on the bloated expenditure of

[1] See 36 Geo. III. cc. 7 and 8; May's *Const. Hist.* ii. 318, *sq.*; and the trial of Brandreth, in *State Trials*, xxxii. 755.

the nation. Excessive establishments were, in his judgment, productive of a double evil. In the first place, the patronage which they involved increased the influence of the Crown, or, as we should more correctly say, of the Ministers; and in the next place the presence of an armed force enabled the Ministry to persevere in autocratic measures.

A standing army which destroyed the freedom of England would not march by beat of drum to Westminster and dismiss the House of Commons; it would not proscribe the House of Peers, and deluge the streets of London with the blood of her magistrates. It would appear in the shape of a guardian of order; it would support the authority of the two Houses of Parliament; it would be hostile to none but mobs and public meetings, and shed no blood but that of labourers and journeymen. It would establish the despotic power, not of a single king or a single general, but of a host of corrupt senators and half a million of petty tyrants. [And he added] Happily the projects of 1816 were defeated; a third of the army has been disbanded, and we are not yet reduced to this dreadful state of servitude. . . . Our poverty and distress have saved our constitution.[1]

Lord John Russell, then, was anxious to clip the wings of aristocracy, and to limit the resources by which it was ordinarily sustained. He stated his views at the opening of the session; seconding, in the debate on the Address, an amendment, moved by Mr. Brand, condemning the Ministry for not convening the legislature at an earlier date, and pledging the House to a rigid inquiry into the public expenditure. In the course of his speech Lord John forced the Government into a premature declaration of its intention to continue the income tax at a reduced rate. He said—

It was reported that Ministers intended very shortly to propose to continue a great part of the income tax. He would say that there could be no more dreadful calamity for this country than the continuance of the tax in question. For now, after glory on glory and victory upon victory, all prosperity has vanished. The farmer could not pay his rent, the landlord could not pay his taxes, and from the lowest labourer of the land to the peer who stood next the throne,

[1] *Russell on the Constitution*, pp. 379, 380, 381: cf. the chapter on 'The Influence of the Crown.'

all felt that our prosperity was gone, except, indeed, those who were paid out of the public purse.[1]

This passage in Lord John's speech really indicated the policy of the Opposition. The Whigs attacked the estimates of the Government and the supplies which Ministers proposed. In the first of these onslaughts they received active assistance from Lord John; he led the opposition to the army estimates, declaring that

> the bare proposal that a standing army of 150,000 men should be supported must alarm every friend to his country and its constitution. . . . A time might arrive . . . when the House of Commons, for its own security, as well as the security of the Crown, would find it necessary to keep up an immense regular force. When that event occurred, the people must bid farewell to that freedom which they had so long and so anxiously preserved.[2]

Lord John Russell's opposition notwithstanding, the Ministry succeeded in carrying its motion,[3] and Lord John himself, oddly enough, was absent from the division. The Whigs were more successful in their attack on the supplies. By presenting night after night petitions against the income tax, and by raising, as the rules of Parliament then permitted them to raise, fresh debates on each petition, they wearied out the Ministry and created an impression in the country which ultimately enabled them to defeat the proposal for continuing the tax. But in these discussions Lord John took no part. He gave a silent vote against the continuance of the tax, and had the satisfaction, for the first time in his life, of finding himself in the majority.

Yet, though Lord John was present in the division on the income tax, and though he spoke from time to time during the session of 1816, the part which he took in the Parliamentary campaign was a very slight one. In 1816, indeed, no accurate record was taken of the manner in which each member of the House of Commons discharged his duties. But on important occasions the votes of members are given in

[1] I have pieced together sentences from the speech: *Hansard*, xxxii. 32, 33.

[2] *Ibid.* 843.

[3] 241 to 121. *Ibid.* 1017. Lord John spoke on two other occasions during the session of 1816. *Ibid.* pp. 607 and 738.

'Hansard.' Thirty-two of these lists are preserved for 1816; but in only three out of the thirty-two does Lord John's name appear. After March 18, when he voted against the property tax, he does not seem to have taken part in any division. After March 20, when he paired with another member, his name drops out of the Parliamentary record.

It is, perhaps, now too late to determine the causes which induced Lord John thus to withdraw from the heat of the Parliamentary campaign. Whether he was simply distrustful of his own powers, or disheartened with his party's weakness; whether he was meditating on other pursuits or seeking information in other countries; whether, as there is reason to think, his health was suffering from the late hours and close atmosphere of the House of Commons—these are questions which cannot now be decisively answered. However that may be, the future leader of the House of Commons, during the first few years of his Parliamentary life, was one of its most irregular attendants.

In one sense, however, his absence had not much significance. The year 1816 is undoubtedly memorable in history, but the circumstance for which it deserves to be chiefly recollected is not the withdrawal of the income tax, but the state of the weather. It was one of those abnormal seasons which, when they occur, make many people believe in the gradual deterioration of the English climate. It is probable that so cold and wet a summer had not been experienced since the end of the seventeenth century; and it is certain that so unfavourable a season did not recur for another sixty years. The harvest almost universally failed, and the price of wheat necessarily rose.

The distress which this state of things occasioned may readily be conceived. At the commencement of the year the poor were suffering from low wages and want of work, but they derived some compensation from the price of food. The average price of wheat in January was only 52*s.* 6*d.* a quarter. But, when Parliament separated in June, this single benefit had ceased. The price of wheat had risen to 74*s.* 10*d.* and it continued to rise till it amounted in December to 103*s.* a quarter. A quarter of wheat is required in the year for food

by each member of the population who lives on wheat. A working man, with a wife and three children, found the cost of his food alone suddenly increased from 13*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.* to 25*l.* 15*s.* a year; and in 1816 there were few working men who were able to command 25*l.* 15*s* a year, or 10*s.* a week, for their labour.

It could hardly be expected that the poor would remain patient under trials which were almost unparalleled. Riots occurred in the agricultural counties of Eastern England. The Luddites, as they were termed, broke the machinery in the manufacturing districts; and the Radicals, embodying their political views in a charter, and thus obtaining the name of Chartists, summoned a meeting in the East of London, at which language of a reprehensible character was used, and a serious riot occurred. The task of the Ministry was, under these circumstances, undoubtedly difficult. The first function of government is the preservation of order; and men cannot be allowed to destroy property and imperil life because they happen to be starving. It was therefore both the right and the duty of Ministers firmly to repress disturbance and enforce the law. But the Liverpool Administration made the grave mistake of assuming that riots, which were attributable to distress, were occasioned by a fixed intention to subvert the constitution, and, instead of relying on the ordinary law, insisted on resorting to a policy of coercion.

The Administration, indeed, felt it necessary to strengthen its hands by preliminary inquiry, and, in the commencement of the session, secured the appointment of secret committees in both Houses of Parliament. Lord Sidmouth, as Secretary of State for the Home Department, desired the services of the Duke of Bedford on the Lords Committee. The Duke availed himself of the excuse which an attack of illness afforded him to refuse to serve; but he took occasion to express to Lord Grenville, who unfortunately shared the alarm of the Minister, the grave apprehension with which he regarded the prospect of coercive legislation. The Duke thought that the disturbances were due to distress; and that the discontent of the people was aggravated by the refusal of the Government, during the previous year, to inquire into the state of the country,

or to concede any of the reforms which moderate men demanded. He went on to say, in a passage which is well worth quoting—

I cannot help being reminded by the present situation of the country, as described by you [Lord Grenville], of the state of Ireland during the period of my short administration in that country. Very serious disturbances existed in several parts of Ireland. Mischievous and ill-disposed persons took advantage of these disturbances, and endeavoured to inflame and increase the discontent. I was strongly urged, and even by some with whom I was associated in the government of Ireland, to resort to strong measures, and put in force the Insurrection Act. I felt convinced in my own mind that the ordinary operations of the law, administered in a continued spirit of temper and firmness, were sufficient to put an end to the disturbances, and the result justified my opinion. Before I quitted Ireland I had the satisfaction to write to Lord Liverpool, then Secretary of State, that the country was perfectly restored to a state of peace and subordination without in the slightest degree compromising the dignity or the safety of the Government, and it is with no small degree of pride that I reflect that my conduct on the occasion met with your entire approbation.

Unfortunately the wise and statesmanlike views which were expressed in this letter found little sympathy in political circles. The secret committees of both Houses reported as they were expected to report; and Ministers, strengthened by these reports, proceeded to introduce Bills into Parliament for the prevention of seditious meetings, for the protection of the Regent's person, for the better prevention of attempts to seduce persons serving, and for the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. The last of these measures forced Lord John from the retirement which he was perhaps contemplating. He spoke on the first reading of the Bill; and his speech was more forcible, was reported with more care, and contains more matter of personal interest, than any he had yet delivered.

I had not intended [he began] to trouble the House with any observations of mine during the present session of Parliament. Indeed, the state of my health induced me to resolve upon quitting the fatiguing business of this House altogether. But he must have no ordinary mind whose attention is not roused in a singular manner

when it is proposed to suspend the rights and liberties of Englishmen, though even for a short period. I am determined for my own part that no weakness of frame, no indisposition of body, shall prevent my protesting against the most dangerous precedent which this House ever made.

After alluding to an argument which had been used in the debate that 'the danger was great because the distress was great,' he went on to point out that the Habeas Corpus Act had been first enacted at a time when a plot had been discovered, which, though it has since been mentioned only as an instance of credulity, bore at the time a most alarming appearance. Not less than 200 persons, many of them of the first rank, were accused of conspiring the death of the King. The heir-presumptive of the throne was supposed to be implicated in the conspiracy, and foreign powers were ready with money and troops to assist in the subversion of our constitution in Church and State. Yet at this time did the Lords and Commons present for the royal assent this very Bill of Habeas Corpus, which for less dangers you are now about to suspend. We talk much—I think a great deal too much—of the wisdom of our ancestors. I wish we would imitate the courage of our ancestors. They were not ready to lay their liberties at the foot of the Crown upon every vain or imaginary alarm.[1]

These passages afford a good example of Lord John Russell's earlier manner. They are remarkable for correctness of language and for vigour of expression. Sir Francis Burdett, in complimenting him upon his speech, declared that 'the name of Russell was dear to every Englishman; and it was peculiarly gratifying to hear the noble Lord, with so much manliness and ability, supporting those rights in the defence of which his revered ancestor lost his life.'[2] But the protest of Lord John was as ineffective as that of his father. The Bill became law, and Lord John, either from consideration for his health, or from despair of success for his principles, again withdrew from his Parliamentary labours.[3]

[1] *Hansard*, xxxv. p. 722. The speech is also republished in Lord J. Russell's *Speeches and Despatches*, i. 177.

[2] *Hansard*, xxxv. 746.

[3] It has been frequently stated that Lord John actually resigned his seat and did not return to Parliament till after the general election of 1818. But this is

Lord John's withdrawal was so complete that his voice was heard only once within the walls of the House of Commons during the next two years; and in the interval he frequently expressed to his friends his determination to abandon political pursuits altogether.

It was such a conversation which suggested to Mr. Moore the following 'Remonstrance':—

What! *thou*, with thy genius, thy youth, and thy name!
Thou, born of a Russell, whose instinct to run
The accustom'd career of thy sires is the same
As the eaglet's to soar with his eyes on the sun;
Whose nobility comes to thee, stamp'd with a seal
Far, far more ennobling than monarch e'er set;
With the blood of thy race offer'd up for the weal
Of a nation that swears by that martyrdom yet!
Shalt *thou* be faint-hearted, and turn from the strife,
From the mighty arena, where all that is grand,
And devoted, and pure, and adorning in life,
Is for high-thoughted spirits like thine to command?
Oh no! never dream it; while good men despair
Between tyrants and traitors, and timid men bow,
Never think for an instant thy country can spare
Such a light from her dark'ning horizon as thou!
With a spirit as meek as the gentlest of those
Who in life's sunny valley lie shelter'd and warm,
Yet bold and heroic as ever yet rose
To the top cliffs of Fortune, and breasted her storm;
With an ardour for liberty, fresh as in youth
It first kindles the bard, and gives light to his lyre,
Yet mellow'd e'en now by that mildness of truth,
Which tempers, but chills not, the patriot fire;
With an eloquence, not like those rills from a height,
Which sparkle, and foam, and in vapour are o'er,
But a current that works out its way into light
Through the filt'ring recesses of thought and of lore:
Thus gifted, thou never canst sleep in the shade;
If the stirring of genius, the music of fame,
And the charm of thy cause have not power to persuade,
Yet think how to freedom thou'rt pledged by thy name.

not the case. He spoke once again in the Parliament of 1812. *Hansard*, xxxviii. 104.

Like the boughs of that laurel, by Delphi's decree,
Set apart for the fane and its service divine,
All the branches that spring from the old Russell tree
Are by liberty *claim'd* for the use of her shrine. [1]

These lines did not induce Lord John immediately to alter his decision; and for some years he seriously meditated abandoning politics for travel and letters. 'Society on the Continent,' was, in his opinion, 'one of the greatest luxuries,' [2] and it so happened that society on the Continent gained for him a new fascination by the presence of one of the members of his own family. In the summer of 1817, Lord John Russell's brother William was married to Miss Rawdon, a daughter of Colonel Rawdon, and a niece of the Lord Moira, once the favourite companion of the Regent, who in 1817 was establishing the supremacy of the British in India. Lady W. Russell had personal charms of a high order. Lord Byron said that she was the only lady he ever saw

Whose bloom could after dancing dare the dawn.[3]

But her intellectual gifts were at least as great as her personal charms. One who knew her well wrote of her that she united 'the attractions of a lively fancy, varied literary knowledge, a tone of conversation which revealed a familiarity with classic thought, together with a charm of manner quite peculiar to herself;' [4] and Lord William himself wrote, twelve years after his marriage:—

In England you all treat Bessy as if she was an ordinary person. But on the Continent she is treated like the most distinguished person in Europe, and, in fact, she is. Sovereigns, potentates,

[1] Lord J. Russell wrote to Moore on this poem, 'Mackintosh showed me your verses addressed to me; and I cannot say how sorry I was when I found that such verses and such praise were not immediately to appear. I do not know that I have felt so proud of anything as being the subject of such good poetry.'

[2] *Essays on Life and Character*, p. 3.

[3] *Beppo*, stanza lxxxiii. For the application of the line to Miss Rawdon, see *Lady W. Russell: a Memoir* (London, 1874).

[4] *Ibid.* p. 11. Lady W. Russell had passed much of her time in Europe, and especially in Italy. Lord John wrote to her from Florence in 1817: 'I was told the other day I could not have done better than have got my passport for Italy signed by you, for your name has universal currency both among those who know you and those who do not.'

princes, ministers, men of letters, and simple individuals seek her acquaintance, and vie with each other to show her attention. Talents and virtue are more respected on the Continent than in England. Rank and riches command respect in our moral country.

Soon after his marriage Lord William became aide-de-camp for a second time to the Duke of Wellington, who was commanding the army of occupation in France; and thus had constant opportunity of enjoying the society, English and French, military and diplomatic, literary and political, which gathered round the illustrious field-marshal.

Those then who appreciate Lord John's strong affection for his brother, who are acquainted with his love of travel, and with his pleasure in foreign society, will have no difficulty in determining how much of his time, which perhaps ought to have been devoted to politics, was given to the fascinations with which his brother and sister-in-law were surrounded. His 'prolific' pen (to use an epithet which Dr. Cartwright had applied to it twelve years before) was, however, again becoming busy. Its activity during the decade 1819 to 1829 was extraordinary. For some reasons it would perhaps be better to deal with these various productions as they were written in chronological order. But as the ten years in which they appeared constituted a period in which their author was taking a constantly increasing interest in affairs, it will be convenient to relate his literary work before reverting to his political conduct.

In these ten years, without reckoning speeches which were separately published, contributions to social periodicals, and political pamphlets, Lord John Russell published (1) 'The Life of William, Lord Russell;' (2) 'Essays and Sketches of Life and Character;' (3) 'Letters written for the Post and not for the Press;' (4) 'An Essay on the History of the English Constitution;' (5) 'The Nun of Arrouca, a Tale;' (6) 'Don Carlos, a Tragedy;' (7) 'Memoirs of the Affairs of Europe from the Peace of Utrecht;' (8) 'A Translation of the Fifth Book of the Odyssey;' (9) 'The Establishment of the Turks in Europe, an Historical Discourse;' (10) 'An Imitation of the 13th Satire of Juvenal, being an Epistle to Mr. Moore.' He composed a farce in five acts,

'The Way to Win Her,' which was never published; he wrote some minor poems; he prepared some long and valuable monographs on Pope and Swift, which were apparently intended to be worked into the third volume of his History; and he composed the essay 'On the Causes of the French Revolution,' which was afterwards separately published in 1832, but which was also originally intended to form part of that volume.

No one who is not acquainted with these various works can realise the labour which they represent, or the time which their preparation must have absorbed. Some of them are now very rare. The 'Letters written for the Post and not for the Press' are not in the British Museum; they are not in Pembroke Lodge; they are not among other Russell literature on the shelves of Woburn Abbey. They are, however, included in the list of Lord John's works by Allibone;[1] and are attributed to him by Lowndes. Of their merits, or of their nature, the present author, who has been unable to procure access to them, is unable to speak, and he passes on therefore at once to the other works in the list.

'The Nun of Arrouca,' written during a visit to Paris in 1820,[2] is a very slender tale; it does not comprise a hundred short pages, and it is more remarkable for its biographical interest than for its literary character. The 'Essays and Sketches' deserve a little longer notice. They were published originally in 1820, at Mr. Moore's suggestion; the authorship being attributed to 'a gentleman who has left his lodgings,' his landlord, 'Joseph Skillett,' in editing the Essays, professing a hope that he might recover some part of his rent by this means. Mr. Skillett also lets us into the author's habits:—

I observed he went to Almack's and the French play; was admitted into the Travellers' Club, wore stays, and used much starch in his neckcloth. Notwithstanding this his life was not so regular as that of most young men of fashion. He did not always go out to dinner at a quarter before eight, nor always come home at five in the morning, nor always get up at half-past two in the afternoon, &c.

[1] Allibone also includes a translation of Monti's tragedy *Caius Gracchus*, which was the work of Lord W. Russell.

[2] *Moore's Memoirs*, iii. 183.

There is reason for hoping that Mr. Skillett may have recovered some portion of his arrears of rent from the publication of the Essays. The secret of the authorship leaked out; a second edition was called for; Mr. Skillett's preface was omitted; and a formal dedication to Thomas Moore, Esq., who advised the publication of the fragments, was added by his 'attached friend,' the author.

The Essays are seventeen in number. They are on many subjects, from political economy, which the author pronounces 'an awful thing,' to orders of knighthood, which 'you now see . . . are not always the reward of merit, and even are sometimes given to cover the want of it.' No especial interest attaches to the majority of them. But they incidentally throw considerable light on their author's biography. For of the seventeen essays only six are undated, while of the remaining eleven, six are dated from Paris, two of the six in 1815, one from Brussels in 1816, and one from Milan in 1818. It is plain, therefore, that, in addition to the numerous journeys already recorded, Lord John was in Paris in 1815, in Belgium in 1816, and in Italy in 1818.[1] These dates probably explain Lord John's frequent absences from his Parliamentary duties.

The following passage from one of these Essays will give a fair example of Lord John's style. The thoughts are the thoughts of a young man of twenty-three.

The English and the French, after an absence of twenty years, have again met in the common intercourse of life, and are exchanging bows, ideas, and sentiments.

I overheard, one day, a young Englishman entertaining a French lady with profligate principles and profane jests. Although she had often heard morality and religion attacked before, she was so scandalised by the coarseness of his conversation that she at last told him his language might suit the vicious society of London, but was too wicked for Paris. His companion was at the same time

[1] Lord John Russell reached Florence early in November 1817. He left on the 8th for Leghorn, to embark for Malta; and from thence to seek an opportunity of going to Greece. But he returned to Florence early in December, and stayed there till the end of January. I infer, therefore, that for some reason he gave up his projected journey to Malta and the East. (Miss Berry's *Journal*, iii. 146, 149).

telling an obscene story to a young lady who fell asleep in the middle of it. These young men are not improved by travel.

An English lady, whom I knew, was remarkable for the plainness of her dress, the modesty of her manners, and the piety of her conduct. She went from Paris this year with her head made into a stand for flowers, her ears never open but to flattery, and her mouth full of the pretty phrases, 'a little flirtation,' &c. . . . She is not improved by travel.

I know a sensible English tradesman, who used to shut a Frenchman out of doors, and laughed at everybody who did not speak English as correctly and even as vulgarly as himself; he was so pleased with the kind reception that he got in France, and the patient attention with which all his blunders were listened to, that he promises he will go and do likewise. He is improved by his travels.

A farmer of good sense and good heart travelled through France soon after the peace. He found that the people were neither sulky in their manner, nor full of hatred against the English, nor utterly abandoned to vice and folly, as he had been told; but, on the contrary, civil, gay, and ingenuous; nay, he found tolerable farmers and honest fathers of families, fewer paupers than in England, and much good effected by the Revolution. He imputed the old quarrels of his nation with theirs to the Government, and recommends to the people to give each other the right hand of friendship. This man is improved and will improve others.

No one can read this passage without mentally making an addition to the category. The man who can so write is one of those who are improved by travel.

Lord John Russell, however, cannot claim to take high rank as an essayist. His ambition, at this period of his life, was probably poetry, and the pieces which he has left in print, as well as those which he has left in manuscript, show that he had much facility in verse. Yet, in this as in other matters, he stands at a disadvantage. The critic can hardly forget that his author rose to be Prime Minister, and tries him by a higher standard than he applies to other men. Prime Ministers are not required to write poetry; but, if they write at all, they are expected to excel.

Whether he excelled or not, Lord John certainly displayed variety in his poetry. 'Don Carlos' is written in blank verse; the imitation of Juvenal in decasyllabic couplets; the trans-

lation of the 'Odyssey' in the metre of 'Don Juan.' The second of these pieces was suggested by Mr. Moore's misfortunes.

> Yes, Moore, the debt of sympathy is paid
> To worth deceived, and artless faith betrayed;
> And still we hope, for thee and us remain
> Mines of thy fancy, ingots of thy brain.[1]

Smooth and easy verses, which have, however, no special interest for us now.

'Don Carlos or Persecution, a Tragedy in five Acts,' is a much more ambitious performance. It has been, perhaps, more unfavourably criticised than any tragedy in the language. It was an obvious and easy occupation, for those who were opposed to the author's political principles, to raise a laugh against him as the pretentious rival of Schiller. Yet, if any one will read the tragedy through, he will probably understand why it went through five editions during the year in which it was published. The tragedy may not be an acting play; it was never put on the stage; but it contains dramatic situations, and passages of power.

The drama, too, has a biographical interest because it points to the moral which Lord John was never tired of enforcing. Don Carlos represents the cause of religious liberty.

> I do remember well—too well, alas!
> My age but scarce fourteen, your royal self
> Absent in Flanders—I was bid preside
> At the great act of faith to be performed
> In fair Valladolid; at that green age
> Quite new to life, nor yet aware of death,
> The solemn pomp amused my careless mind.
> But when the dismal tragedy began,
> How were my feelings changed and clouded.

He describes the horrors of an auto-da-fé, and adds—

> I should have told
> That, ere the hecatomb began, Valdéz,
> As Great Inquisitor, tendered an oath,

[1] The Epistle was anonymous, only fifty copies being printed for distribution among Mr. Moore's friends. (*Moore's Memoirs*, ii. 356.)

Which I, unwilling, took. I thereby swore
If ever I should see, or hear, or know,
By any means, of aught concerned the faith
Of friend or stranger, parent, brother, son,
I should reveal the same without delay
Unto the Holy Office : that dark oath
I took ; but, thanks to Heaven, I broke.

But it is unnecessary to pursue the narrative. Don Carlos is brought before Valdéz, and his friend, his friend's wife, and Philip himself are summoned to bear witness against him. Don Carlos admits the charge.

My defence
Is brief and hopeless : I avow it all !
All that your witnesses have sworn I swear,
And pledge my honour for its truth. Think not
That I will stoop or crouch beneath your feet,
Unsay my words, and creep away dishonoured :
What I have done I own, that I have spoken
I speak again : yet I deny my guilt,
All that I did was innocent.

There are probably ten people alive who have read 'Don Carlos' for every person who has read the translation of the fifth book of the 'Odyssey.' Yet those who are acquainted with both these performances may possibly be inclined to rate the translation above the tragedy. Lord John indeed told Mr. Moore that Lord Holland declared against it 'because he likes Homer so much he thinks nobody can do him justice. All that I could get him to say was that, if the "Odyssey" were translated in a different metre from mine, and by a different person, it might do.' What Lord Holland probably meant was that Lord John's scholarship was hardly equal to the task which he had set himself, and that he had needlessly increased his difficulties by his choice of a metre.

Probably no translator can do Homer justice. But, in our own time, it is fashionable to attempt the task of translating the 'Iliad' and 'Odyssey.' Lord John is neither the only statesman nor the only Prime Minister who has made the attempt. Yet there is no gainsaying the force of Lord

Holland's criticism. When an author translates κέλητ' ἵππον 'an untrained horse,' it is reasonable to suspect the deficiencies of his scholarship. When we compare such a passage as

> Dismiss him straight, nor brave the chastening hand
> Of mighty Jove

with Pope's epigrammatic line

> Dismiss the man, nor irritate the god,

we begin to suspect the difficulties of the metre. Yet, when all this has been said, it must be added that the translation has fidelity and force, and that the translator has triumphed in a signal manner over the difficulties of his subject.

Take, for instance, the famous passage near the beginning of the book describing the flight of Mercury :—

> The golden sandals on his feet he tied,
> Wing'd and immortal, by whose aid he darts,
> Swift as the gale, o'er lands and oceans wide:
> Then grasp'd the wand, whose magic power imparts
> Sleep to the eyes of men: or, if applied
> With other aim, the weary mortal starts
> From deepest slumber. Bearing in his hand
> This rod, he lighted on the Pierian land.

When Lord John wrote 'wing'd,' he was probably thinking more of Virgil's version, or of John of Bologna's statue, than of Homer's language; and, when he threw in the addition 'if applied with other aim,' he was sacrificing force to the exigencies of his metre. But in all other respects the passage is surely an admirable rendering of the original.

Or take Ulysses' speech in the storm :—

> Ah me! what woes are now to close my care?
> Divine Calypso was too truly skill'd
> When she predicted I had much to bear :—
> 'Tis now, alas! too fatally fulfill'd!
> What clouds portentous fill the darken'd air!
> What waves the sea! my death the gods have will'd.
> Thrice happy Greeks, who met a warrior's doom,
> And found at once a trophy and a tomb.

Would I had perish'd in that happier hour
When, as I shielded Peleus' dying son,
The Trojans round me, mustering all their power,
Pour'd thick their brazen spears: then had I won
Funeral honours, and the deathless dower
Of glorious fame: but now my day is done.
For what a mournful end have I been kept,
My corse unhonour'd, and my fate unwept.

Here, again, the last four lines have been unduly expanded; but the passage, as a whole, is rendered with remarkable force and fidelity.

It is, of course, impossible in a few extracts to give an idea of a poem; but it is equally impossible, in a concise memoir, to afford space for a more detailed description. The reader who wishes to test Lord John's capacity as dramatist and translator must turn from this passage to Lord John's own writings. But Lord John was not merely a poet, he was also an historian. Before closing this chapter it is necessary to allude briefly to his qualities in this respect.

The four works, composed before 1832, on which Lord John Russell's claim to rank as an historian must rest, are: (1) the 'History of the English Constitution;' (2) the 'Life of William, Lord Russell;' (3) the 'Memoirs of the Affairs of Europe,' with its supplement the 'Essay on the Causes of the French Revolution;' and (4) the 'Historical Discourse on the Establishment of the Turks in Europe.'

The best known of these works is the 'Essay on the English Government and Constitution.' It has gone through many editions; it has been translated into a foreign language; and, after a lapse of nearly seventy years, is still occasionally read and sold. Few books, even among those which succeed, can claim equal vitality.

Lord John, in his original edition, avowed that the book was a fragment.

It was my object [so he wrote in the preface] to illustrate, by an analysis of the history of the governments of modern Europe, from the commencement of the fifteenth century, two very plain but somewhat neglected truths. The first is, that the monarchies of the Continent of Europe have been, generally speaking, so ill-adapted to

make their subjects virtuous and happy that they require, or required, complete regeneration. The second is that the government of England ought not to be included in this class: that it is calculated to produce liberty, worth, and content among the people, whilst its abuses easily admit of reforms consistent with its spirit, capable of being effected without injury or danger, and mainly contributing to its preservation.

Lord John went on to say that the latter part of the work was the only part that he had finished. But, before the second edition was called for, he seems to have seen that the work, which he had regarded as a fragment, was, or was capable of being made, a complete whole. He consequently omitted his preface, greatly expanded the concluding portions of his book, and added a dedication to Lord Grey.

The book, in the shape which it thus assumed, became much less the book of a constitutional historian than of a constitutional statesman. Instead of being an analysis of the principles of the constitution, it was an inquiry into the manner in which the abuses which had crept into it could be amended. It was a political confession of faith; made, as it turned out, by the man who, beyond all others, was to shape the creed of the Whig party. As such, it was not merely a constitutional disquisition on the history of the past; it had an important bearing on the history of the future; and the work derives its chief importance, not from what the author was, but from what the author became.

Most good judges assert that the book was the ablest of its author's numerous productions. It is doubtful, however, whether the palm of merit ought not to be given to a longer work—the 'Memoirs of the Affairs of Europe.' The little that is to be said on this book may be said in connection with the 'Life of William, Lord Russell,' with the 'Discourse on the Turks,' and with the 'Essay on the French Revolution.'

Three of these four works are essentially historical in their character. The fourth professes to be a biography, but it really partakes much more of the nature of a history. 'The Life of William, Lord Russell,' might, indeed, be appropriately called 'The History of the Reign of Charles II. with some remarks on the Trial of Lord Russell.' This book, therefore,

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really falls under the same category as the others, and Lord John's qualifications as an historian may be considered with reference to them all.

It is remarkable that his own idea of writing history apparently was altered in the ten or twelve years which elapsed between the publication of 'The Life of Lord Russell' and that of 'The Causes of the French Revolution.' In the former book the reader misses the personal interest which is inseparable from all good biography. He feels that he is studying the time, and not that he is forming acquaintance with the man. But in the latter book he is tempted to make an exactly opposite criticism. He finds himself perpetually acquiring a knowledge of the details—the occasionally unsavoury details—of the lives of such men as Rousseau, Voltaire, Diderot, and others; and as constantly asking whether these references have any proper place in a philosophical historical treatise. Thus in the reign of Charles II. he is tempted to conclude that he is getting too much history and too little biography; while in the eighteenth century he is inclined to complain that he is getting too much biography and too little history.

The second criticism which may be applied to Lord John's historical writings is really due to the times in which he wrote. In the beginning of this century an historian was not expected to have the same familiarity with original authorities which he is required to possess now. In one of his early essays Lord John himself called Hume 'the most profound of modern historians.'[1] The epithet at once proves that Lord John had formed no conception of the qualifications which historians would in future be required to possess. Hume was one of the most profound thinkers of his generation; but he has no claim to be regarded as a profound historian.

This misconception may be traced in all Lord John's historical writings. His reading was wide; his authorities were famous; but the occasions are only few when he travels beyond the ordinary books, or out of the beaten path, for his information. This circumstance is, indeed, hardly true of the 'Life of Lord Russell.' In preparing that work, Lord John

[1] *Essays, Life and Character*, p. 63.

relied on the then unpublished letters of Rachel, Lady Russell; and, in the later edition, he had the advantage of reading the despatches of Barillon, to which the French Government had previously refused him access.[1] But the 'Memoirs of the Affairs of Europe' is composed on a much more slender basis; and perhaps few historical works of great importance and ability have been constructed on narrower foundations.

For, notwithstanding the defects which have been mentioned, the 'Memoirs of the Affairs of Europe' is both able and important. The account, with which the first volume commences, of the state of France at the conclusion of the reign of Louis XIV., is the most adequate in the English language. The description with which the second volume closes of the religious movement in England during the eighteenth century is perhaps tinged with the author's bias, but it is full, clear, and comprehensive. The opening chapters of the 'Essay on the French Revolution,' which was originally intended as part of the third volume, are equally satisfactory; the 'Historical Discourse on the Turks in Europe' is short and pregnant; and all these works may be read with interest and advantage in the present day.

The opinions of the author are visible throughout his books. No one can doubt, as he reads, that he is occupied with the work of a man who is by conviction the firm friend of civil and religious liberty. The books are the books of a Whig, intended—so his critics constantly alleged—to propagate Whig doctrines. Every book written by a man who thinks and believes is in one sense open to a similar charge. Yet, if Lord John's works are thus far Whig books, they are singularly free from either prejudice or passion; and, if they labour to convince, they carry conviction from the moderation of their language, and not from the vigour of their expressions.

Something perhaps ought to be added respecting Lord John Russell's style. His diction is always simple, pure, and unaffected. His style, clear at the beginning, improved by practice, and some of his sentences sparkle

[1] For the refusal, Preface, xviii-xxii, of Moore's *Memoirs*, iii. 6.

with point and antithesis which would have done credit to Gibbon.

Yet, when all this has been said, it cannot be added that Lord John achieved any marked success as an historian. His earlier works, indeed, ran through several editions. The 'Life of Lord Russell' gained for the author a profit of at least 200*l.*; and the first volume of the 'History' was subsequently reproduced in two volumes, post octavo. But, if an inference may be drawn from the publishers' account, this edition had only a nominal sale, while only 500 copies of the second quarto volume were printed, and more than half of these were unsold six months after their publication. It is a proverb among publishers that continuations sell badly. Yet any one who has read the book, and who recollects that at the time of its publication its author was already known as a statesman of promise, will be surprised at the result. Disappointment alone might have induced the author to abandon the work if political avocations into which he was to be immediately drawn had not, thenceforward for several years, occupied all his time, and left him without leisure for literary pursuits.

If, however, his books failed to obtain the large circulation which authors naturally desire for their works, and if the most important of them had in consequence less influence than it deserved, their composition had one effect which must not be lost sight of. The man who gained most from Lord John's literary pursuits was Lord John himself. They made him, on the threshold of his career as a Minister, the most accomplished politician of his time. In the character of his knowledge, indeed, he formed a striking contrast to the statesman who, thenceforward, was to be his formidable adversary. Sir Robert Peel was a far better scholar than Lord John, and a much better economist. Lord John's knowledge of the classics, it has already been stated, was not exact, and his economical views were not always sound. But he had a much more intimate acquaintance with the history of his own country and of surrounding nations than Sir Robert Peel could claim. In the debates on organic questions which were immediately to arise this circumstance was to stand him in good stead. For it was his mission to reform both Church and State, and it was his good fortune, in doing

so, to be able to show that he had a better knowledge of the principles on which the Constitution had been founded than any of the Tories who criticised his measures.

His works, at the time they were published, won him much credit among his own friends. Lady Spencer, Lord Althorp's mother, wrote to him in 1819:—

As I read your book [the life of Lord Russell] I return grateful and cordial thanks to God that He has bestowed on its author every qualification so peculiarly called for by our country just now—venerable rank, joined to the strictest virtue, brightest talents, and highest principle. These, united so happily in you, my dear Lord John, make you indeed an object on which it is pleasant to dwell, and as I read your beautiful and striking sentiments I know not which I most do, admire you as a public man, or love you as a private one.

Lord John was not a favourite among reviewers; and, when he became famous, his early productions were criticised with great bitterness in many periodicals. The early reviews on his works apparently suggested to him a poem, written evidently in the first half of the twenties, some sentences of which are worth transcribing.

REVIEWS.

Horace was wont in ancient times to scold,
His Romans never read but what was old:
Esteem'd their volumes as they did their wine,
And deem'd an author young at ninety-nine.
Far diff'rent our disease; our readers seek
No classic but the classic of the week,
Devour a novel reeking from the press,
And hate old authors like old-fashioned dress.
Th' eternal question of th' eternal blue,
What can I read? pray is there nothing new?
New, yes, there is: the great unknown still writes
Of gibbering witches and crusading knights.
For me, I own, with fresh delight I turn
To tales of Fergus fierce and Burley stern,
Tremble with Jeanie Deans upon her way,
And watch with dread old Elspeth's latter day;
Laugh with the Bailie, much admire Rob Roy,
And of Meg Merrilies can never cloy.

But for the Pirate half way gone in crime,
And Nigel winning sixpence at a time,
Who can be moved? Nor, though the book may sell,
Dip I my bucket in St. Ronan's well.
Still blame I not; the all-devouring maw
Cries for fresh food.

. . . . . .

Such is this reading age, which after all
Feeds worse than any miser's servants' hall;
Devours what yesterday was roast and boil'd,
In various hashes, heated, hack'd, and spoil'd.
Le Sage, Cervantes, Fielding, and Molière,
Few care to know if such men ever were;
But with a glossary's help not one will fail
To pore o'er every new Trans-Tweedic tale,
And more applaud the cunning Scotchman's wit
Than all that Addison or Congreve writ.
Strange that with these the market 's overstock'd:
By jostling books the road to fame is block'd.
The Muses, now grown common, walk the streets,
Each ploughman's heart for letter'd glory beats;
Byron is aped by misses in their teens,
And Moore's poor mimics sweeten magazines.

. . . . . .

Nay, Richard Skimall, whose impartial eye
From grave to gay can light and listless fly,
Who mingles Hannah More and Thomas Paine,
Repeating all things, nothing to retain;
Who loves at dinner to produce the lore
Which Murray publish'd some few hours before;
Now fairly vanquish'd by the press of press,
Of this day's works his ignorance must confess.
Hence rose reviews. In blue and buff and brown,
To fifteen pages boil'd whole quartos down;
O'er heavy meats their pungent pepper threw,
Disguised with skill what harsh and vapid grew,
And gave to students, picking bits in haste,
Of superficial things a superficial taste.
Well, this was bearable, but, waxing great,
These middlemen began t' oppress and cheat,
Defrauded the lord reader of his due,
And ground the author by whose sweat they grew.

. . . . . .

Your modern critic seeks but for defects,
Shears, twists, misquotes, cuts, mangles, and rejects ;
In making blots approves himself acute,
And, when a beauty strikes his eye, is mute ;
Fixes, like flies, upon a tainted spot,
And spreads his filth till all the carcass rot.
But let us analyse this mighty 'we,'
The dreaded lord of him, and you, and me.
Some misform'd reptile we may chance to find,
With envy jaundiced, or false learning blind.
In ancient temple thus a colonnade
Enclosed the spot where trembling vows were paid ;
In matchless sculpture heroes stood on high,
And fragrant incense fill'd the ambient sky.
Yet poor weak mortals, in this proud abode,
Adored an ox, or deified a toad.
So our great critics, hid within their shrine,
Assume the honours due to things divine.

. . . . . .

But let these gods assume their proper names,
They're only fit for ducking in the Thames. .

CHAPTER V.

FIRST STRUGGLES FOR REFORM.

THE Parliament of 1812, to which Lord John had been elected in the session of 1813, was dissolved in the summer of 1818. At the general election which then took place, the Whigs succeeded in slightly reducing the majority by which the Tory Government was supported, and the various members of the Russell family again resumed their old places in the House of Commons. Lord Tavistock was returned for Bedfordshire; Lord William for Bedford; Lord John and his uncle, Lord William Russell, for Tavistock.

It was computed at the time that the ranks of the regular Opposition were increased by the election from 140 to 173 members. Even thus the Whigs did not command the support of much more than one member out of every four. And a mere statement of these numbers did not reveal the true weakness of their condition. For all practical purposes they were without a leader. They had lost, since the conclusion of the great war, Mr. Ponsonby, Mr. Whitbread, and Mr. Horner. Sir Samuel Romilly died in the interval between the dissolution of 1818 and the meeting of Parliament; and Mr. Tierney, whose ability and experience made him in one sense the leader of the Opposition, did not command either the confidence or the votes of Lord Grenville's friends.

This state of things, however injurious to the Whigs as a party, afforded opportunities to Whigs as individuals. Guerilla warfare—whether in the Senate or the field—is fruitful in opportunities to young men of energy and talent; and Lord John, who was recovering from the weak health which had depressed his energies and restricted his activity in 1817, was accordingly ready to take a more conspicuous part in the

Parliamentary campaign. Hitherto he had rarely spoken in debate, and had been constantly absent from divisions. In 1819 he was a frequent speaker, and constant attendant to his Parliamentary duties.

Of the seven occasions on which Lord John spoke during 1819, little need be said. In March he was advocating a reduction in the number of the Lords of the Admiralty; in May he was supporting Mr. Tierney's motion for an inquiry into domestic and foreign policy, and procuring a return of the material part of the indictment on which Sir M. Lopes had been convicted of bribery; in June he was condemning the surrender of Parga to the Turks,[1] and attacking the increased excise duties which Mr. Vansittart was proposing; and in July he was pledging the House to take the system of bribery into its consideration at the commencement of the following session. But the speech of most significance made by him during the session was on Sir F. Burdett's motion on Parliamentary Reform in July. In a few sentences he declared that, though he was not opposed to all Reform, he could not accept schemes which were regarded as wild and visionary, or support an inquiry which was 'calculated to throw a slur upon the representation of the country and to fill the minds of the

[1] The town of Parga, on the coast of Epirus, had for centuries maintained municipal independence under the protection of Venice. With the destruction of the Venetian Republic it was occupied by a French garrison, but the inhabitants rose against the French troops, expelled them from their territory, and surrendered the town to the British. In 1815, the British Government ceded the town to the Turks, stipulating, however, that any of the inhabitants who desired to leave should be compensated for their property. The Parguinotes decided on moving as a body to the Ionian Islands; but their claim to compensation for their property, which they estimated as worth 300,000*l.*, was gradually cut down to one half that sum. A case of this character—the surrender of a people to a despotic government—was abhorrent to Lord John's whole nature. He protested in 1819 against the cession of the Parguinotes; he drew formal attention to their case in 1820, severely condemning both the policy of the Government and the conduct of Sir T. Maitland, the Governor of the Ionian Islands, who was charged with its execution; and he contributed, through Ugo Foscolo, out of his own purse to the necessities of the Parguinotes. Lord John had made Ugo Foscolo's acquaintance some years before, and Ugo Foscolo had introduced him to a friend at Geneva as 'doué d'une âme noble, et d'un esprit distingué, mais surtout il a une aimabilité que l'on trouve rarement parmi ses concitoyens. Il vous sera cher aussi pour ses opinions, car il a été dans le Parlement l'un des défenseurs de la liberté des hommes.'

people with vague and indefinite alarms.'[1] These few sentences had far more effect than any that Lord John had yet spoken. They elicited a somewhat angry remonstrance from Sir F. Burdett, but they made Lord John the champion of the moderate Reformers.

These various Parliamentary speeches illustrated only a portion of his political labours. In the year in which they were made he published, under the guise of a letter to Lord Holland, an important pamphlet on foreign politics, in which he reviewed the condition of the various States of Europe, condemned the policy of the Holy Alliance, and called upon England 'to keep aloof from meetings of sovereigns and auctions of subjects.'

He who has read the foregoing pages cannot be at a loss to discover the causes of the unpopularity of England on the Continent. It was supposed that she was the friend of right, and the patron of the liberal constitution which has been the foundation of her own glory. Instead of this she has been found the follower and the tool of the great Continental monarchs; assisting their spoliations, and confirming their destruction of free governments; violating promises solemnly given, and conditions offered in the plenitude of success; pursuing her course totally regardless of the cries and supplications of Europe. . . It will be said, perhaps, that England was not able, by herself, to protect the rights and independence of nations; but, if so, in God's name, why did she interfere? Why is the name of the English Minister to be affixed to every act of injustice which is perpetrated in Europe? What deadly enemy of England's honourable reputation persuaded Lord Castlereagh that the repose of the world depended on the slavery of Saxony and Genoa? England might have appeared as a member of a confederacy to oppose France without sanctioning any of those acts of pillage by which the deliverance of Europe has been disgraced. If she was not able to prevent those acts, she need not have soiled her fair fame by appearing to countenance them.

Throughout the session, therefore, Lord John had been exceptionally busy; and his labours had not been merely great, his influence and weight were increasing. His father wrote to him on June 1—

I have had a good deal of conversation with old Tierney at

[1] *Hansard*, xl. 1496.

Cassiobury[1] about you. I felt anxious to know in what way he thought you would be most useful in your senatorial capacity. I find with pleasure that he has a very high opinion of your debating powers; and says, if you will stick to one branch of politics and not range over too desultory a field, you may become eminently useful and conspicuous in the House of Commons. He says your speech on his motion was very good, but his friends were dismayed by the great numerical strength of the line of battle in front of them, and became flat and dispirited, and consequently did not cheer you as they ought to have done. The line I should recommend for your selection would be that of foreign politics, and all home politics bearing on civil and religious liberty—a pretty wide range. I hope you will raise your voice on Thursday against the Attorney-General's odious Bill.[2]

Lord John was evidently paying increased attention to the business of the House of Commons. At the close of the Parliamentary session, however, the old instinct returned in full force, and Lord John again decided on foreign travel. He had the good fortune in securing, as the principal companion of his tour, a man who was thenceforward to be drawn into close communication with him, to share his entire confidence, and to some extent to influence and shape his opinions. He had, indeed, for many years enjoyed a slight acquaintance with Mr. Moore. But, from November 1818, Lord John's name recurs with growing frequency in the poet's journal. Mr. Moore was at this time suffering from the failure of his deputy in the sinecure office in Bermuda to which he had been

[1] The seat of Lord Essex in Hertfordshire. Writing to Lord John from Cassiobury in 1827, Lord Dudley, who was then Foreign Secretary, said, 'The most singular form of government with which I am acquainted is that which obtains here at Cassiobury. So far as I recollect, it is not mentioned by Aristotle. It is a pure *Doulocracy*. I have seen some approach to it in other places, but here alone it is quite unmixed—the person who, in a language borrowed from institutions of an opposite nature, is improperly termed the Master of the House, exercising no control over the liveried and salaried depositaries of all lawful authority. These rulers take very little notice of such persons as arrive here under a notion of being his guests; and are evidently displeased with any behaviour on their part that seems to proceed from a misapprehension of the real nature of the institutions established within the walls. It is said, indeed, that there are two or three carpenters and joiners about the place that submit to receive orders from him, but I have no distinct evidence of the anomaly, in which, therefore, I rather disbelieve.'

[2] The Foreign Enlistment Bill, on which, however, Lord John did not speak.

appointed in 1803. Heavy pecuniary liabilities were hanging over him, and his friends were seriously considering whether they should find him a retreat at Holyrood or advise him to seek seclusion on the Continent till he was freed from his embarrassments. Pending the poet's decision,[1] some of his admirers came forward with offers of pecuniary help. Lord Tavistock, writing to Lord John at Bowood, said—

I am very poor, but, having always felt the strongest admiration for his independent mind, I would willingly sacrifice something to be of service to him.

And Lord John forwarded the letter to the poet in the accompanying note :—

Bowood.

My dear Sir,—I enclose you a note from Tavistock on the subject on which we spoke yesterday. I hope you will not be offended with my saying at the same time that if you had not expressed to me your resolution not to accept of any assistance, I meant to have proposed to you yesterday to take the future editions of the 'Life of Lord Russell,' as, by Longman's agreement with me, he was to publish the first edition upon paying only for the print. Perhaps the 'remainder' is not worth anything ; but if it is, it is heartily at your service. . . .

Believe me, yours truly,

J. RUSSELL.[2]

[1] The correspondence on this subject is still preserved among the Russell papers. Mr. Allen and Sir J. Mackintosh obtained the highest opinions that (1) until Mr. Moore's creditors obtained from the Scotch authorities letters of caption against him his person would be free from arrest in Scotland ; and (2) within the sanctuary of Holyrood House he would be absolutely free from arrest.

[2] This letter is the only extant letter from Lord John to Mr. Moore beginning 'My dear Sir.' All the subsequent letters commence 'Dear Moore.' There is an allusion to the correspondence in the text in Moore's *Diaries*, ii. 343. Lord John reverted to the offer in October 1821 : 'I wish you would take my 200*l.* and leave more of your 2,000*l.* for other things [i.e. the 2,000*l.*, or guineas, advanced by Messrs. Murray to Moore on the security of Lord Byron's *Memoirs* : see Moore's *Memoirs*, iii. 260 *sq.*]. I say this seriously and with a reason. For it is not 200*l.* out of my pocket, but proceeds of the sale of Lord Byron's *Life*. I have made it a service of duty to spend the money in a manner suitable to the source it came from—for the Parguinotes, for Whitbread's election, &c. I shall not in any event profane it to common daily expenses ; and after all you may with as much dignity receive the value of the *Life* of Lord Russell as of Lord Byron. Q.E.D. I shall expect to hear no more about it.' Messrs. Longman in 1822 applied this 200*l.* to the settlement of what Mr. Moore called the Bermuda claim (*Memoirs*, iv. 22). But it was apparently repaid and suffered to roll up at compound interest till it

Mr. Moore at the time declined to accept the proffered help, or to seek shelter from his creditors under a royal roof. The more his wiser friends pressed on him the advantages of Holyrood, the more he himself sighed for the freedom of the Continent. On August 30, 1819, Sir James Mackintosh wrote to him—

The Continent is best for pleasure; Holyrood House for study, composition, present income, and lasting fame.

But the next post brought a letter from Lord John:—

Dear Moore,—Rogers, as I suppose you know, declines going. I hope you have not been persuaded by Allen that Holyrood House, with a view of Arthur's Seat, is better than Paris with a range of all Europe. I must leave town, however, Saturday, so pray let me know your mind to-morrow night, when I shall be in Arlington Street. I want to go on Saturday in order to cross in my father's packet on Sunday.—Yours truly,

J. R.

The bait proved irresistible. Mr. Moore packed up his clothes, sent his wife down to Sloperton in the coach, and on Saturday, September 4,

set off with Lord John in his carriage at seven; breakfasted, and arrived at Dover to dinner at seven o'clock; the journey very agreeable, Lord John mild and sensible. . . .

Talked a good deal of politics. Lord John much more moderate in his opposition than the Duke and Lord Tavistock.

On the following morning Lord John and Mr. Moore sailed with the Duke and Duchess of Bedford to Calais, and on the Monday the four friends parted company, the Duke and Duchess setting out for the Rhine and Vienna, Lord John and Mr. Moore for Paris.

Lord John remained with Mr. Moore in Paris till September 18, spending much of his time in consulting Barillon's papers, to which the French authorities had previously refused him

amounted in 1837 to 440*l*. It was then, as appears from a letter to Lord John from Messrs. Longman, invested in favour of the poet's second son, John Russell Moore, to whom Lord John had stood sponsor. 'I shall be happy,' so he had written to Mr. Moore in 1823, 'to stand godfather to any production of yours or Mrs. Moore's; so pray tell her I am delighted with the honour entrusted to me.'

access. Then, after passing through Fontainebleau, Tonnerre, and Dijon, the two friends crossed the Jura and descended on Geneva,[1] where Lord John's uncle, Lord William, had a villa. Crossing the Simplon, they passed through Como, and reached Milan on October 1. Thence Mr. Moore turned eastward to pay a visit to Lord Byron, who was living near Padua; Lord John turned westward to Genoa.

It was probably Lord John's intention, when he left Mr. Moore at Milan, to renew acquaintance with a lady who occupied for many years a warm place in his regard. The Durazzos were a noble family in Genoa in the eighteenth century; and, as Lord John went out of his way to declare, in his 'Memoirs of the Affairs of Europe,'[2] they made large sacrifices in the cause of the Republic. In 1819 the head of the house had for a wife a lady who sixty years ago was well known in English society, and who was described by Mr. Moore as 'a fine woman; must have been beautiful; not at all like an Italian.'[3] Lord John had probably made Madame Durazzo's acquaintance during a visit to Genoa in the early part of 1818; and, on leaving the town, had bade her farewell in a sonnet which is still preserved among his papers.[4] He

[1] This descent suggested to Mr. Moore the first of his series of poems called *Rhymes on the Road.*

[2] *Memoirs of the Affairs of Europe*, ii. 336.

[3] Moore's *Memoirs*, iii. 235.

[4] The lines are as follows:—

ON LEAVING GENOA. FEB.

Genoa, farewell! thy placid bright blue sea,
The hills that with their folds do gird thee round,
As 't were an infant's cradle, and surround
Thy brow with vine and orange, are to me
Most dear: nor yet refuse I to admire
Thy line of palaces, the dwellings high
Of men who once look'd with unflinching eye
On mighty kings inflamed with freedom's fire.
Yet thou hast to my heart a stronger tie;
And when I think upon thy mountain cape
Braving the waves with its majestic shape,
Such harmony of sea and earth and sky
Shall speak of her whose influence balms the air
And with her presence would make deserts fair.

I infer that this was written in February 1818, as Lord John was at Florence

certainly was with her in October 1819, for his stepmother, in writing to him from Vienna, sends her kindest remembrance to 'la belle et aimable Louise;' and it is probable therefore that, when Mr. Moore parted from Lord John at Milan, the latter was drawn to Genoa by a more potent charm than 'mountain cape' or 'placid sea.'

His visit was destined to be abruptly terminated. Before Lord John had left England, meetings, held in various parts of the country to promote the measure of Reform which the House of Commons had refused to consider, had culminated in the great gathering at St. Peter's Field, near Manchester, which is known in history as Peterloo. The yeomanry, in obedience to the instructions of an injudicious magistrate, charged and dispersed the crowd. But this course was unhappily attended with bloodshed; and, though the magistrates of the neighbourhood, and the Liverpool Administration, thought fit to approve or condone what had been done, a cry of indignation was raised throughout England. Meetings, denouncing the conduct of magistrates and Ministers, were held in London, Yorkshire, and many of the largest English towns; and Ministers, alarmed at these demonstrations, determined on hastily summoning Parliament for the sake of obtaining what one of them called 'new laws' for a 'new state of things.'

If Ministers were alarmed at the condition of the country, the Opposition was concerned at the prospect of fresh measures of coercion. It was evidently no time for rising Whigs—the friends of civil and religious liberty—to pass their days in sweet dalliance with beautiful Italian ladies in Genoa, and Lord John was accordingly urged to return home. But the letters in which he was urged to return were not merely the persuasive summonses of the Tapers and Tadpoles of the Whig party anxious to secure one more vote for their leader. They form a remarkable testimony to Lord John's position.

in the autumn of 1817, and at Milan in 1818, and I cannot find that he was again in Italy in February for many years afterwards. In a letter dated March 30, '29, and signed 'with sincere friendship, yr. sincerely affte.,' Madame Durazzo says, in the quaint English of a foreigner, 'I feel a sort of pride in every display of your talent, because I have had the quickness of finding out soon the distinction of your mind.'

The first of them was from Sir James Mackintosh :—[1]

My dear Lord John,—Parliament is, you see, to meet on the 27th of next month, and you are more wanted than anybody, not only for general service, but because your Reform must be immediately brought forward, if possible as the act of the party, but at all events as the creed of all Whig Reformers.[2]

The second was from Mr. Allen :—

You will have seen from the newspapers that Parliament is to meet before the end of November. I don't know why I should write to you ; but Lord William presses me to urge you to return by that time. It will be a very important session. Ministers have various gagging measures to propose, and it is most essential for the character and credit of Opposition that they should consider well what line to take on the occasion. It is most important also, in my opinion, that, while they declare most explicitly and unequivocally against the Radical Reformers of all descriptions, they should not allow the opportunity to pass of bringing forward specific measures of their own in favour of Parliamentary Reform. But, if such a movement is to be made, you are the person to make it, and with that view it is most desirable that you should be here, not for action only, but for deliberation. Mackintosh is completely of my mind in this respect, as you will have seen by a letter which he wrote you from this House by last post. Brougham is still in Cumberland, but he will be in town before the end of the month, and, from what he has seen in the North, he is strongly impressed with the truth of both the propositions I have laid down. . . .

The state of the country is very alarming. The funds low, the revenue declining ; alarm in the class of proprietors, discontent and disaffection among the non-proprietors ; one party ready to sacrifice their liberties for security from popular excesses, and another party ready to rush headlong into civil war for imaginary rights to which they have no claim and which would ruin them if obtained.

Yours ever faithfully,

J. ALLEN.

H[olland] H[ouse] : October 17, 1829.

[1] It was on his return in 1819 that Sir J. Mackintosh addressed Lord John in the words of Virgil :—

Ecquid in antiquam virtutem animosque viriles
Et pater Æneas et avunculus excitat Hector?

[2] I do not quote the rest of this letter, which is printed *in extenso* in Lord J. Russell's *Speeches and Despatches*, i. 171.

Before these letters reached Lord John, he had already made up his mind to return. Writing on the 14th of October from Voltri, he said to Mr. Moore :—

There is a talk of Parliament meeting in November, and I should not like to be far off. Pray join me here as soon as you can ; if not here I shall be at Paris, but not later than the beginning of next month. . . . I had two letters yesterday, one from a Whig saying it would come right if Ministers did not sabre the people, another from a Tory in great alarm at the meeting of Parliament. But we must do our duty, abuse us who may.

And he added from Genoa on the 9th of November :—

I am much disappointed at finding you do not come, as I have waited some days longer than I should have done in hopes of seeing you,—longer even than the day you were to have been here by the original plan. But you have done quite right not to leave Rome in a hurry. It was not built, and cannot be seen, in a day.

I am just setting off for London. Mackintosh has written me an oily letter, to which I have answered a vinegar one ; but I want you to keep me up in acerbity. . . .

Yours ever,
J. R.

I cannot say how sorry I am to lose you. D—n the Reformers and Lord Sidmouth too for this.

Lord John did not lose much time on his journey home. Parliament met on the 25th of November, and Ministers at once announced the introduction of the famous measures which are known in history as the Six Acts. But, before the debate on the Address was concluded, Lord John gave notice that, on the 14th of the following month, he would bring forward resolutions for the disfranchisement of Grampound, and for the prevention of corruption.

On the eve of moving these resolutions, Lord John wrote to Mr. Moore :—

I hope you think we Whigs have done as well by the constitution as we could. But some of us have shown much alarm, particularly Lyttelton and Morpeth. Plunket makes powerful and vigorous invectives against liberty and law.

I am going to-day to make a little motion for Reform. The violent will not care for it and the other side will throw it out, and

so my public attendances will cease for the present. There can be little doubt that in a few years, unless there is a sudden change of public opinion, the forms of government will be almost entirely changed.

While the Six Acts were before the Commons, such a reflection was not unnatural. Yet the change which was coming was the reverse of that which Lord John was anticipating, and the first note was to be sounded on the motion which he was thus proposing.

In fact, the condition of Grampound was so corrupt, and its corruption was so notorious, that it was no longer possible either to defend or ignore it. Other places in the West of England had, indeed, a reputation as evil. But Grampound was peculiar in its misfortune, since Sir Manasseh Lopes, who had purchased the borough, had quarrelled with the rival candidate, had been indicted for bribery at Exeter, and had been sentenced to pay a heavy fine and to suffer two years' imprisonment.

Lord John's knowledge of constitutional history enabled him to prove that historical precedent was in favour of organic Reform ; and that he was only desiring to revert to 'the wholesome practice of altering and enlarging the basis of representation which had continued till the end of the reign of Charles II.' He accordingly asked the House to affirm : 1. That all boroughs, in which gross and notorious bribery and corruption shall be proved to prevail, should cease to return members to Parliament ; 2. That the right so taken away should be given to some great town or to the largest counties ; 3. That it is the duty of the House to consider of further means to detect and to prevent corruption in Parliamentary elections ; and 4. That it is expedient that the borough of Grampound should be disfranchised.[1]

[1] It was in this speech that Lord John, arguing for moderate against Radical reform, said, 'The principles of the construction of this House are pure and worthy. If we should endeavour to change them altogether we should commit the folly of the servant in the story of Aladdin, who is deceived by the cry of "New lamps for old." Our lamp is covered with dirt and rubbish, but it has a magical power. It has raised up a smiling land. . . . And, sir, shall we change an instrument which has produced effects so wonderful for a burnished and tinsel article of modern manufacture? No. Small as the remaining treasure of the Constitu-

Such was the moderate proposal of Reform which Lord John introduced in 1819. Lord Castlereagh rose, after the motion had been seconded, and declared that the noble Lord had debated the question in a manner that was highly creditable to his judgment, and which naturally disposed his mind to make any practicable concession. He consequently promised that, if Lord John would withdraw his resolutions, and bring in a Bill to disfranchise the borough of Grampound, he would not throw the least difficulty in his way. Lord John, of course, at once accepted an offer which was more favourable than he had anticipated; and the debate closed amidst an unexpected unanimity.

Such was the first step towards organic Reform taken in the nineteenth century. Yet some time was yet to elapse before even Grampound was to pay the penalty for its misdoing. For, before Lord John could introduce a Bill for its disfranchisement, an event occurred which abruptly terminated the Parliament of 1818. On January 29, 1820, George III. died; and on February 28, in accordance with the law which was then in force, Parliament was dissolved.

In the short interval which occurred between the death of the King and the dissolution of Parliament, Lord John took one more step in the direction of Reform. He asked for, and obtained, leave to introduce a Bill suspending the issue of writs to the three corrupt boroughs of Penryn, Camelford, and Grampound. The House of Commons not merely passed the Bill, but, on the suggestion of Mr. Charles Wynn, added Barnstaple to the list. Unfortunately, however, between the discussion of the Bill in the Commons and the Lords, the dastardly plot, which is known in history as the Cato Street Conspiracy, was detected. The horrid design to murder the entire Cabinet provoked a strong feeling against the Reformers. Lord Eldon, speaking as Chancellor, declared

tion is, I cannot consent to throw it into the wheel for the chance of obtaining a prize in the lottery of constitutions.' (*Speeches and Despatches*, i. 198.) Years afterwards Lord John told Mr. Moore that the passage, when it was spoken, produced very little effect, though 'Brougham used to sneer a good deal at this image, saying "Gentlemen who talk figuratively about lamps."' (Moore's *Memoirs*, vi. 203.) Twelve years afterwards, however, it was quoted against its author by Sir Robert Peel, and suggested to 'H. B.' one of his best caricatures.

that it was unjust to accept the Bill except on evidence, and that evidence tendered to the Commons could not be acknowledged by the Lords. Tory peers thus obtained a technical excuse for leaving things as they were; and the corrupt boroughs of Western England were left for a little longer undisturbed.

In the new Parliament, which was elected in the spring of 1820, Lord John did not continue to represent his former constituency. On the requisition of the yeomen of Huntingdonshire, he stood and was elected for that county, where the retirement of Lord F. Montagu, uncle to the Duke of Manchester, had made a vacancy. Booted and spurred in the full dignity of a knight of a shire,[1] Lord John resumed his seat in the House of Commons, and, on the first available opportunity, announced his intention of bringing in a Bill to disfranchise Grampound and to transfer the representation to the borough of Leeds; vesting the franchise in those inhabitants of the borough who occupied a house rated at 5*l.* and upwards. The debates on the Bill which was accordingly introduced revealed the difference which existed between the views of Lord John and those of the Ministers of the Crown. Both were inclined to accept the principle that a corrupt borough should be disfranchised. But, while Lord John desired to transfer the representation to Leeds or to some other great town, Ministers wished to follow the precedents which had been set in the cases of Shoreham, Cricklade, and Aylesbury, and to merge it in the adjacent hundreds.

Lord Castlereagh, who, as Lord John said in his old age, 'was very kind to him,' endeavoured privately to persuade him to adopt the proffered compromise. Lord John, however, declined to give way; and, after securing the second reading of the Bill on May 19, moved the House into committee upon it on June 5. Mr. Davies Gilbert, a gentleman of some eminence in the realms of science, and the representative of Bodmin, thereupon moved an instruction to the committee to extend the right of voting in Grampound to the freeholders of

[1] In the beginning of this century borough members were not allowed to wear spurs in the House of Commons.

the adjacent hundreds of Powder and Pyder. The issue was thus distinctly stated; the lists were prepared; the combatants were marshalled for the affray; when both armies suddenly dispersed at some momentous news—Queen Caroline had landed at Dover.

The landing of the Queen, her triumphant entry into London, and the miserable proceedings which the Liverpool Administration were unhappily persuaded by the King to institute against his wife, need not be detailed at length in these pages. From the moment of her arrival the business of Parliament was virtually suspended, and no further opportunity arose for discussing the rival claims of the town of Leeds and the hundreds of Powder and Pyder. But, if Lord John was unable to press forward his chief object, he took a remarkable part in the discussion on the Queen's affairs. He had already shown his independence of Court favour by supporting Mr. Hume, both with voice and vote, in a motion for securing further consideration of the amount fixed for the new civil list; and by urging the restoration of the Queen's name to the Liturgy, drawing in doing so a striking parallel between Catherine, the injured queen of Henry VIII., and Caroline, the injured queen of George IV.[1] When the Lords were assembled to consider the Bill of Pains and Penalties which the Administration introduced, he drew up a petition to the King, which he enclosed in a letter to Mr. Wilberforce, praying him to close the proceedings by proroguing the Parliament. Letters and petitions were subsequently published, with a preface, in which Lord John explained his reasons for addressing the letter to Mr. Wilberforce, by pleading that 'he was, on the question of the Queen, the organ of the sentiments of a majority of the House of Commons.'[2]

The paper had no effect. The King was bent on degrading

[1] Lord John further showed, his independence of Court favour by subscribing in the following year 25*l.* towards the fund raised to compensate Sir R. Wilson on his removal from the army after his conduct on the Queen's funeral; and again, in 1824, by calling for detailed estimates and plans of the alterations which George the Fourth was making at Windsor.

[2] Mr. Moore, in his diary, writes: 'A clever paper from England to-day, written by my friend Lord John, in the form of a petition to the King on the subject of the Queen; full of good sense, moderation, and talent.'—*Diary*, iii. 137.

his wife, and his Ministers were reluctant to oppose their sovereign's wishes. To the great scandal of all decent people the autumn was occupied with examining the details of the Queen's conduct, and in debating whether her Majesty had been merely indiscreet, or indiscreet and guilty. So soon as the proceedings came to an end, Lord John left London, and perhaps a few extracts from Mr. Moore's diary will best continue the story:—

November 24.—Soon after breakfast, to my great surprise, Lord John Russell was announced to me. Arrived last night; truly happy to see him. Talked much of the political proceedings in England; thinks that the Queen's business had done a great deal of good in renewing the old and natural alliance between the Whigs and the people, and weakening the influence of the Radicals with the latter. Told me, to my great pride and delight, that he (Lord John) had just dedicated the second edition of his essays to me;[1] spoke of my poem on him,[2] which appeared to give him great pleasure.

November 25.— . . . Found a copy of Lord John's book, just arrived by the ambassador's courier, from the Longmans. He calls himself in the dedication my 'attached friend.' This tribute from a Russell gives me real pleasure.

November 29.—Wrote a note to Lord John, to express what I felt on reading him; said it was a rare thing to be at once so sensible and so lively, and to be furnished, like a pyramid, both with point and base.

January 2, 1821.—Gallois came and sat for some time. Lamented that Lord John showed to so little advantage in society, from his extreme taciturnity, and still more from his apparent coldness and indifference to what is said by others; said that several here to whom he was introduced had been much disappointed in consequence of this manner. I can easily imagine that to Frenchmen such reserve and silence must appear something quite out of the course of nature.

Lord John remained at Paris from November 23, 1820, to January 1, 1821.

He wrote to Mr. Moore from Calais on his way home:—

Solitude is a fine thing to think about; but in M. Dessin's house at Calais to practise it is wretched enough. The night before last I was at Montreuil, and determined to set off at one in the morning to sail

[1] *Essays and Sketches of Life and Character.* See *ante*, p. 94.

[2] The Remonstrance. See *ante*, p. 91.

yesterday. I am glad I did not. The English messenger stopped at Boulogne, and the French mail did not sail, being engaged to a large family and going no faster than an Irish express. It snowed nearly all day yesterday, and I was glad enough to get on here. There is a large vessel bound to London that proposes to take me to Dover, but the Captain would not go to-day as the French pilot said the sea was 'trop dure.' I suppose it is not worth his while, or he would take his chance and carry Cæsar and his fortunes over the water. I hope a packet will come over to-day and deliver me, otherwise I may be kept a week. England seems to be still occupied in addressing and petitioning. Fine work when we come—not to be hanged, I hope, but to hang.

Three days afterwards he added from London :—

I arrived here yesterday, after being kept a day at Calais. The passage was good, only four hours, but we were near having an accident coming in. . . . The country is in an excellent state. Much depends, however, on to-day and Wednesday. To-day there is a Derbyshire loyal meeting, and on Wednesday a Shropshire loyal meeting. The Duke of Devonshire and Lord George are gone to oppose the first, and Bennet the second. They will have the hearts of the people with them. These little loyal meetings have done more for us by creating a spirit than all we could do besides. Campbell's magazine is come out ; it does not make much noise. Mackintosh is keeping back the 'Edinburgh Review' for a paper on Reform. He has been very unwell. . . . We have a Bedfordshire meeting on Friday.

During the visit to Paris, which was thus concluded, Lord John was constantly in Mr. Moore's society, but he found time to compose the little novelette, 'The Nun of Arrouca,' which has been referred to in the preceding chapter, while he brought the year to a conclusion with a poem which was appropriate enough to the period. According to Mr. Moore, Lord John

sent off to Perry[1] by to-day's post the parody he wrote on William Spencer's poem the other day. Spencer's is entitled 'The Year 1806,' and begins 'It is gone with its thorns and its roses.' Lord John's parody begins very happily, 'It is gone where the late Mr. Rose is.'[2]

[1] The editor of the *Morning Chronicle*, the leading Whig journal.

[2] The Right Hon. Geo. Rose, the friend and colleague of Pitt, died in 1818.

The full text is as follows :—

1820.

It is gone where the late Mr. Rose is,
It is gone with its sham peace and plenty.
Time's charnel for ever encloses
The year eighteen hundred and twenty.
It is gone with Madrid's Inquisition,
It is gone with the Penalties Bill,
And we pray that no artful magician
To raise them again may have skill.
It is gone with Lord Liverpool's character,
Also that of Will Fletcher, the spy.
But this land, though they've blister'd and barrack'd her,
Still kicks and refuses to die.
Now peace to the days that are gone ;
We have most of us cause to lament ye ;
Here 's a curse for Louisa Demont,[1]
And farewell, eighteen hundred and twenty.

And there was, no doubt, a good deal which Englishmen in general, and Lord John in particular, could grieve over in their retrospect of the year. Lord John's own favourite proposal had been lost amidst the excitement of the Queen's trial. Yet, while other people were poring over miserable evidence, Lord John was strengthening his own mind by much more wholesome literature. It was in 1820 that he composed the 'Essay on the English Government and the Constitution,' which he published early in 1821. The chapter on Parliamentary Reform in the first edition, which in later editions became the chapter on the Constitution of the House of Commons, is a long and powerful argument to prove that 'the House of Commons does not adequately represent the people, and that the small boroughs prevent that vigilant stewardship of the public revenue which is the bounden duty and peculiar function of that assembly.' This argument perhaps led logically to a much stronger remedy than a Bill for the disfranchisement of Grampound. For the present, however, Lord John was contented with reintroducing the Grampound Bill.

In order to remove opposition, he consented that the fran-

[1] Louise Demont, Queen Caroline's Swiss maid, and one of the principal witnesses against her.

chise in the new borough should be fixed at 10*l.* instead of 5*l.* and he successfully resisted two amendments, for merging the representation in the adjacent hundreds, and for conferring it on the freeholders of Yorkshire. But he was not equally successful in resisting a proposal of Mr. Stuart Wortley to limit the franchise to 20*l.* householders, and he abandoned the further conduct of the Bill. Though, however, he thought it right thus to mark his disapprobation of the amendment, he did not withhold his support from the measure of which Mr. Stuart Wortley himself took charge. He both spoke and voted in favour of the third reading; and, when the Bill was altered by the Lords, and the franchise which was taken from Grampound was transferred by them from the burgesses of Leeds to the freeholders of Yorkshire, he again raised his voice in favour of concession.

> The question was, whether or not the Bill, as amended, was so ill-adapted to its object that it would be well to reject it. The object was first to reform the borough of Grampound, and then to transfer the right of returning two representatives to another place. . . . The Commons had proposed to give the franchise to the borough of Leeds; the Lords decided that it should be transferred to the large county of York. Now, though he wished that Leeds should return two members to Parliament, he was still of opinion that more members ought to be given to the county of York. He was therefore contented that the Bill as amended should pass; but in a future session he proposed to call attention to the claims of large towns to send members to this House.

The opposition of the Lords was thus impelling Lord John to a fresh step, and the refusal of the Upper House of Parliament to enfranchise the householders of Leeds was directing his attention to the claims of other large towns.

Lord John, indeed, had already moved in this direction. Early in 1821 Mr. Lambton, who was afterwards better known as Lord Durham, had brought forward a proposal for triennial Parliaments, for the extension of the suffrage to all holders of property, and for the disfranchisement of rotten boroughs. The debate had been brought to an abrupt conclusion on the second evening, when Mr. Lambton was himself absent from the House, and only 100 members were present; and on

May 9, 1821, while the Grampound Disfranchisement Bill was before the Lords, Lord John had followed up Mr. Lambton's motion by proposing four resolutions:—(1) Affirming the gross bribery and corruption which were prevalent in many boroughs; (2) Declaring the expediency of strengthening the connection between the people and Parliament by giving direct representation to wealthy and populous places; and appointing a select committee to consider (3) How such places could be given representation without an inconvenient addition to the House of Commons; and (4) How charges of bribery might in future be best investigated with a view to the disfranchisement of the guilty boroughs.

Undoubtedly the most important circumstance in connection with these resolutions was the division upon them—Lord John was only defeated by 155 votes to 124. Such a division naturally encouraged him to persevere. On April 25, 1822, he again brought forward the whole subject. Advancing far beyond any proposal which he had hitherto made, he asked that 100 new members should be added to the House—60 for counties and 40 for the great towns and commercial interests of the country. In order that the size of the House might not be inconveniently increased, he proposed that the hundred smallest boroughs should be deprived of one member each.[1]

In the division on this remarkable motion, the Reformers succeeded in securing 164 votes—40 more than had supported Lord John in the previous year. But the majority rose from 155 votes to 269, and their strength in the division was

[1] This speech raised Lord John's reputation. His old friend Lady Spencer wrote to him:—

'How are you, my dear Lord John? I dared not yesterday intrude on your repose; but to-day I can no longer resist my anxious inquiries. To tell you my warm and cordial delight at your well-deserved and complete success is quite out of the question, for I cannot express it. To hear from every mouth, as I do, that, however highly your talents and powers were thought of before, they are now estimated by universal concurrence as they have always been rated by us who have had the happiness of intimate intercourse with you, is a pleasure too bright to describe. But I do enjoy it from my inmost heart. Tell me you are well, and I shall have nothing to wish for about you.—Ever affectionately yours,

'LAVINIA SPENCER.

'April 27: Spencer House.'

only one advantage which the Tories derived from the debate. For the brunt of the battle on their side fell on Mr. Canning; and the speech which the great orator delivered was one of his most successful efforts. In the course of it he referred, in a passage which has been often quoted, to Lord John himself:—

That the noble lord will carry his motion this evening I have no fear; but, with the talents which he has shown himself to possess, and with (I sincerely hope) a long and brilliant career of Parliamentary distinction before him, he will, no doubt, renew his efforts hereafter. Although I presume not to expect that he will give any weight to observations or warnings of mine, yet on this, probably the last, opportunity which I shall have of raising my voice on the question of Parliamentary Reform, while I conjure the House to pause before it consents to adopt the proposition of the noble lord, I cannot help conjuring the noble lord himself to pause before he again presses it upon the country. If, however, he shall persevere, and if his perseverance shall be successful, and if the results of their success shall be such as I cannot help apprehending, his be the triumph to have precipitated those results, be mine the consolation that, to the utmost and to the latest of my power, I have opposed them.

The anticipations of this famous paragraph were not fulfilled. Mr. Canning did not go to India; the premature death of Lord Castlereagh, in the following August, opened to him other opportunities.[1] He became Foreign Secretary and leader of the House of Commons. As such he had occasions, which he had not anticipated, of resisting Parliamentary Reform. But his admirers derive little consolation from his conduct. To Lord John belongs the credit of having precipitated Reform. Mr. Canning, by resisting it, very nearly precipitated a revolution.

Yet, for the time, the prospects of the Reformers were not favourable. The reconstruction of the Tory Government,

[1] Lord J. Russell, writing to Mr. Moore in January 1822, said: 'Canning is, I suppose, to bury himself in India. He is a fool for his pains; but it is a fine moral on the value of character in this country.' Lord John was at that time writing the *Memoirs of the Affairs of Europe*, in which the passage occurs: 'It is the character of party, especially in England, to ask for the assistance of a man of talent, but to follow the guidance of a man of character.' He probably took the idea from Voltaire.' He applied the phrase to Sir R. Walpole and Mr. Bolingbroke; but he probably knew that one of his friends applied it to Lord Castlereagh and Mr. Canning.

after Lord Castlereagh's death, was in itself an obstacle to organic Reform. Both Mr. Canning and Mr. Peel, the only really important members of the Administration, were opposed to it. The Reformers had already found that they were in a minority in the House of Commons. The country, regaining its former prosperity, lapsed into something like apathy. The Whig leaders declined to make Reform a party question; and Mr. Tierney went so far as to declare his conviction that it never could be made a party question. Twice again, indeed, during the Parliament of 1820, Lord John re-stated his old arguments and reintroduced the old subject. But the House listened with indifference or even lassitude to the short debates which took place on these motions. In 1823 Lord John was defeated by 280 votes to 169, in 1826 by 247 votes to 123; and, discouraged by these defeats, he did not again bring forward any broad proposal until he was able to rise with the authority of a Minister and to demand consideration for a larger measure than any he had hitherto contemplated.

If Lord John temporarily abstained from proposing any large measure of organic Reform, he addressed himself in earnest to another kindred subject. In 1826 the Parliament, elected at the commencement of the new reign, had already entered on the last year of its authorised existence. A general election was therefore imminent, and Lord John, following up the steps which he had already taken in the case of Grampound, introduced a Bill to secure the discovery and suppression of bribery. The Bill was read a first and second time without a division: but finally abandoned by its author in consequence of the threatened opposition of the Ministry. But Lord John did not stop with that discomfiture. In the last week of the session he brought forward a series of resolutions affirming the policy which he wished to declare by his Bill. The House was equally divided on the first resolution; and the Speaker, considering it 'declaratory of what are the powers and what is the duty of the House,' gave his vote with the ayes.

In the week which followed this division, the Parliament of 1820 was dissolved; and Lord John naturally appealed to his old constituents in Huntingdonshire. But he did so

without any great confidence in his chance of victory. In Parliament, indeed, he was already regarded as one of the foremost members of the Whig party; but, in rural England, country gentlemen and country clergymen persisted, to borrow Mr. Lowell's illustration, in spelling Evolution with a capital 'R,' and looked with disfavour on Reformers. After a visit which he paid to his constituents in April 1826, Lord John wrote to Mr. Moore—

My triumph in Hunts, I fear, is more cry than wool. But I own it is a great pleasure to have the people with me. I wish you would come to the election. The women are so eager on our side, it is quite a pleasure to see them.

The women and the people were equally without votes; Lord Mandeville, the eldest son of the Duke of Manchester, came forward in conjunction with Mr. Fellowes in opposition to Lord John, who had the mortification of encountering defeat and finding himself out of Parliament.[1]

His first thought on his defeat was of the measure for the prevention of bribery, on which he had lately won so great a triumph. Disabled from forwarding it himself, he decided on entrusting it to a friend who had already fought side by side with him in the ranks; and who, a few years later, was to claim his service as his leader. The letter in which he thus committed the Bill to Lord Althorp's charge was subsequently published as a pamphlet, and the 'Times' gave it a wider circulation by republishing it in its columns. His father wrote to him—

I knew nothing of your letter to Althorp till it actually came from the press, and I received a copy of it from Ridgway. I did not even know that you meant to publish such a thing. It is admirable; every sentence and every line to the purpose. Short, but perfectly clear and intelligible, and what every reformer must approve.

It is impossible in this memoir to imitate the example of the 'Times' and to reproduce the whole pamphlet. But a short extract from it will explain its tendency and the policy which Lord John had initiated.

[1] The final numbers were: Lord Mandeville, 963; Mr. Fellowes, 911; Lord J. Russell, 858.

Bribery is clearly forbidden by the law, and it is competent for every British subject to petition the House of Commons, praying them to inquire into any particular instance of that offence which may have occurred under his own observation. The House may, if it thinks fit, refer such a petition to the Committee of Privileges, or to any other committee it may choose to appoint for the purpose.

Bribery in a candidate, however, makes void the election, and a petition complaining of bribery committed, with a view to the last election in a borough, is properly an election petition. But a term of fourteen days is the limited period within which a petition of this nature can be presented, and various onerous duties are imposed upon the petitioner—he must enter into a recognisance to pursue his complaint, and must incur an expense of some hundreds or even some thousands in prosecuting the inquiry.

Still this mode of inquiry is now so established that when upon two or three occasions complaints have been sent to me of bribery in a particular borough, I feared to bring them before the House of Commons lest I should be told that the petition was an election petition which could not otherwise be entertained.

. . . . . .

From this state of things great impunity has been allowed to gross acts of corruption. A gentleman from London goes down to a borough of which he scarcely before knew the existence. The electors do not ask his political opinions; they do not inquire into his private character; they only require to be satisfied of the impurity of his intentions. If he is elected, no one in all probability ontests the validity of his return. His opponents are as guilty as he is, and no other person will incur the expense of a petition for the sake of a public benefit. Fifteen days after the meeting of Parliament, a handsome reward is distributed to each of the worthy and independent electors.

This is the practice against which the resolutions of the late House of Commons were directed. They pledge the House to inquiry, not on a question between two rivals contending for a seat, but on a question affecting the character and purity of Parliament. They allow complaints to be made, not only against the sitting member, but against the borough; they enlarge the time within which such complaints may be made, and, instead of deterring petitioners by expense, they provide that a specific complaint, if fit to be inquired into, shall be inquired into for the sake of the public at the public cost.

. . . . . .

Such is the proposition approved by the late House of Commons,

and which I venture to think not unworthy of being countenanced by a Whig Reformer. There are many other abuses in our present mode of elections, to which local remedies might, I think, be successfully applied ; nor is there any one more fit or more able than yourself to conduct such measures. Undoubtedly many obstacles would be raised to delay our progress, especially on the part of 'the presiding genius of the House of Lords.' But I am persuaded that Reformers in general have never made a sufficient estimate of the support they would receive, or set a sufficient value on the objects they might attain, by a vigorous attack on particular abuses.

Having thus relieved his mind by enlisting Lord Althorp's support in favour of the measure, Lord John turned his back on London, crossed the Channel, and paid a visit to Paris, Geneva, Genoa, Florence, and Rome. He remained at Geneva long enough to compose the translation of the fifth book of the 'Odyssey,' two extracts from which have been given in the previous chapter; and he seems to have contemplated remaining abroad till the following May.

This decision alarmed some of his friends. His brother, Lord William, wrote to him—

Brighton : Nov. 5.

My dear John,—I have received your letters, but did not answer them sooner from not knowing how to direct to you, and have waited till I thought you would be at Rome. But I am doubtful how to calculate, for a man who goes to Genoa to see a pretty woman [1] is as likely to remain there as to go to Rome ; and, were I writing to anybody but you, I should direct to Genoa, and not to Rome. . . . You say you cannot think why people should wish you to come home to Parliament, and will not attend to you when there. You are too modest, but you are particularly wanted now to look after the rotten boroughs ; they are under your special guard, and, if you are in Parliament without watching them, you will be in great disgrace. Your only excuse will be not being in Parliament. . . . If you feel any ambition (which you have not), if you give up the charms of Genoa (which you cannot); if you could renounce the dinners and

[1] Madame Durazzo. The Durazzos had been in England in the autumn of 1824 ; and Lord John, in their company, had paid a series of visits at Bowood, Longleat, Cassiobury, Middleton, Panshanger, and other places. The record of some of these visits, which were enlivened by the society of Crabbe, Rogers, Luttrell, and Moore, may still be read in Mr. Moore's *Memoirs*.

tea-tables and gossips of Rome (which you cannot), if you would cease to care about attending balls and assemblies, and dangling after ladies (which you cannot), there is a noble field of ambition and utility opened to a statesman. It is Ireland—suffering, ill-used Ireland! The gratitude of millions, the applause of the world, would attend the man who would rescue the poor country. The place is open, and must soon be filled up. Ireland cannot remain as she is. The Ministers feel it, and would gladly listen to any man who would point out the way to relieve her. Undertake the task; it is one of great difficulty, but let that be your encouragement. See the Pope's minister; have his opinion on the Catholic question; go to Ireland; find out the causes of her suffering; make yourself master of the subject. Set to work, as you did about Reform, by curing small evils at first. . . . I am pointing to the way for you to make your name immortal—by doing good to millions and to your country. But you will yawn over this, and go to some good dinner to be agreeable—the height of ambition with the present generation.

In Huntingdonshire they go on toasting you, and saying you will never desert them. My father is here, the Hollands, Tierneys, Flahaults; and Brighton may vie with Rome for givers and receivers of dinners.—Affectionately yours,

G. W. R.

In the meanwhile other friends were as anxious as Lord William for Lord John to return, and were busily engaged in procuring him some new seat. It was at first intended that he should be brought in for Lord Fitzwilliam's borough of Higham Ferrers, for which Mr. Frederick Ponsonby had been elected, and from which it was thought that he would be willing to retire. But it was ultimately arranged that Lord John should be nominated for the Irish borough, Bandon Bridge, to which the Duke of Devonshire had an alternate nomination. The letter in which his old schoolfellow the Duke made the offer reached Lord John in Genoa.

London: Nov. 15, 1826.

My dear Lord,—On my arrival here I find that my alternate nomination to the borough of Bandon is still at my disposal, and I have the greatest satisfaction in offering it to you. It may be necessary to name the member before your answer can have arrived; therefore I hope you will not be dissatisfied at finding yourself *elected.*

The recollection of our early acquaintance, and my approval of your public character, add to the pleasure that I always feel in whatever connects me with your family.—Believe me, &c.,

DEVONSHIRE.

The election altered Lord John's plans. He spent his Christmas in Florence;[1] but, instead of passing the winter in Italy, he returned to London. Mr. Moore met him there towards the end of February, and gave him some natural pleasure by telling him that he was about to dedicate his new book 'The Epicurean' to him;[2] and, at the end of that month, Lord John, as member for Bandon, was supporting the proposal which Lord Althorp was making for the suppression of bribery.

The session, thus begun, was destined to be a very memorable one. On February 18, Lord Liverpool, worn out with twenty years of office, and with the anxieties arising from the cares of his position and the dissensions of his colleagues, was seized with the mixed attack of paralysis and apoplexy from which he never recovered. On the 10th of the following April the King reluctantly decided to entrust Mr. Canning with the task of forming a Ministry. Mr. Peel, the Duke of Wellington, Lords Westmoreland, Bathurst, Melville, and Bexley thereupon retired from the Cabinet; and Mr. Canning was compelled to form an Administration out of the remaining available materials. It was natural, under such circumstances, that he should look for support to the Whigs; and, though they were by no means unanimous on the subject, they agreed to support the Ministry without office, on the understanding that room should be found for them before the close of the session.

The arrangement was, of course, soon known. The provisional character of the Ministry was denounced, and Mr. Canning, in weak health and without efficient aid, found it

[1] He wrote 'a very smart prologue' for some private theatricals which Lord Normanby gave in Florence. Lord Normanby reminded him of this twenty-nine years afterwards.

[2] The dedication is as follows: 'To Lord John Russell. This volume is inscribed by one who admires his character and talents, and is proud of his friendship.'

necessary to hasten the intended coalition. Lord Lansdowne entered the Cabinet without office; Mr. Tierney accepted the Mastership of the Mint; and some minor situations in the Ministry were conferred on other members of the Whig party. But these appointments, if they slightly increased the strength of a weak Administration, had the effect of emphasising the differences of the Whig party. Lord Grey declined to act with Lord Lansdowne, either by joining or even supporting the Ministry; Lord Althorp agreed with Lord Grey; while, in the Russell family, the Duke of Bedford opposed the Ministry which Lord Tavistock and Lord John decided on supporting. Such a state of things was not favourable to Parliamentary activity. Lord John himself declared that he was 'too happy' to see Mr. Canning in office free from the restrictions of Tory support, 'to wish to moot against him the necessity of Parliamentary Reform;'[1] and throughout the session he showed more disposition to support the Government than to forward his own views.

At the close of the session Mr. Canning, whose health had remained feeble, went down to Chiswick; and the public was startled to hear of his death before it had realised that he was ill. His death ought, perhaps, to have abruptly terminated the existence of the Ministry. But Lord Goderich was persuaded to succeed him; Lord Lansdowne and Mr. Tierney consented to serve under Lord Goderich, and the weak Ministry was enabled to go on till it crumbled into pieces at the opening of Parliament.

The Duke wrote to his son on April 26—

> All I hear upon politics so disgusts and dispirits me that I almost wish to hear nothing further on so painful a subject. Still, however, as an old coachman loves the crack of the whip . . . pray write me your calm and unbiassed opinion. I consider myself as completely *hors de combat*; but it is painful to me to differ from those I love and value.

He added three days afterwards—

> I have just received your letter. It is a candid and dispassionate

[1] *Hansard*, N.S. xvii. 544.

statement of the strange political intrigues just brought to a conclusion, and I need not add that your own decision upon the line you mean to adopt is upright and honourable. You view the matter in a far more favourable light than I do, and I own I cannot but feel out of spirits when I see the Whig party lowered as it is by these transactions. I do not blame Lansdowne, because I am sure he has acted from motives of the highest honour, but I do very sincerely pity him. . . . He has been the victim and dupe of the two greatest rogues (politically speaking) in the kingdom. . . . I consider the hope of carrying the Catholic question as now at an end.

On May 12 he wrote—

I have closed my political book, and will content myself with assuring you that I have no feelings either of 'bitterness or displeasure.' . . . Literary subjects are far pleasanter than those connected with politics, and I hear much anxiety in many quarters to learn whether we are to expect anything further from you in the historical or memoir department. I wish also to consult you about my family papers, which I propose to print, but I think not to publish.

And again in August, after Mr. Canning's death, he wrote—

I had determined to write to you no more on politics, as it is my misfortune to differ from you, and I hate differing from those I love. . . . We owe all our misfortunes to a little faction at Brooks's consisting of Brougham, Sir Robert Wilson, Sir F. Burdett, and Duncannon. Each had his own views, and it is no difficult matter to surmise by what their views were directed. . . . Lord Goderich seems to be a good-natured and good-humoured man, but totally unfit for a Prime Minister, or to be leader of a party in either House of Parliament; in principle a very decided Tory (the Catholic question always excepted), and longing to get back amongst his old friends and associates.

So far the Duke of Bedford. Lady Holland, who spoke Lord Holland's mind, wrote to Lord John in April—

The negotiation between Canning and Lord L[ansdowne] is suspended, perhaps I should say at an end. . . . But there is an eagerness for their junction that makes men forget all their former principles in their desire to attain it. This confounded division of the country into Protestant and Catholic makes the King as powerful as

ever Henry VIII. was. He is at present as anti-Catholic as his father, and has assured the Archbishop that they may depend on him as Defender of the Church. The other sentiment that influences him is resentment against the seceders. . . . Canning flatters this passion by obsequiousness to his will; and, as I understand the matter, hopes for nothing and will dare to do nothing, till time and his own dexterity overcome the scruples of H. M.'s conscience. This is a pretty state of things for Whigs to support, and nothing but fear of the seceders coming back to office and forming a thoroughly ultra-Tory and anti-Catholic Government could induce them to a coalition so repugnant to all their feeling and principles.

Lord John himself wrote to Mr. Moore in July—

Canning, I hope, will last in spite of your prognostics. His physician says he has a good constitution, and only requires temperance to be well. Next session who knows but what after all Peel may support Government, and Althorp, Tavistock, and I be in opposition? I hope not. But these new gentry must do something for the people: they ought to repeal all the bad parts of the Six Acts and favour my small Reform. Bringing Birmingham and Manchester into Parliament would be very popular.

Mr. Canning's death terminated this speculation.

Cowdray: Aug. 16.

Dear Moore,—I cannot think about Lord Byron [1] now. Other thoughts occupy me like the rest of the world. The loss of Canning is one of which we before spoke, but did not expect so soon. Although his death has not broken up the Administration, its spirit, I fear, will be impaired by that loss. He inspired foreign powers with respect, domestic Tories with hatred. . . . Now foreign powers will fear no longer, and outwit, if they do not bully us. The Tories, instead of opposing Lord Goderich, will court him. If he yields to their seductions he must break with us.' If he does not feel eagerly for the Catholic question, he will make himself a regular Tory Minister.

Between you and I [*sic*], a friend of ours,[2] honest as the purest virgin,

[1] Mr. Moore was engaged on a *Life of Lord Byron*, and had asked Lord John for his opinion on some matters connected with it. Cowdray Park in Sussex, from which the letter is dated, was at this time the seat of Mr. Poyntz. It is now the property of Lord Egmont.

[2] Lord Lansdowne.

is most unfit to deal with men in important political transactions; he is too yielding, too mild, and has too little ambition. He should be made of sterner stuff. For this reason I hope Lord Holland will come in and inspire him with timely resolution. . . .—Yours faithfully,

J. RUSSELL.

Mr. Moore wrote to Lord John on October 31—

I feel a little anxious to know exactly the colour of your politics just now; as from the rumours I hear of some of your brother 'watchmen,' Althorp, Milton, &c., I begin sometimes to apprehend that you too may be among the fallers off. Lord Lansdowne tells me, however, you continue quite staunch, and for his sake I hope so. . .

. . . I had a glimpse of your book[1] the other day at Bowood; but as it was in request I could not get hold of it but for a few minutes before breakfast: so I do not as yet know how far you have brought the very interesting information (which I see it contains) to bear upon the present state of the Turkish question. How close you have been about the book, telling it to no one (Rogers says) but the 'Literary Gazette'! Sam has been at Bowood, alternately amusing and disagreeable, flowery and thorny, smile and bile, as usual. He did not mention the bread sauce, but he spoke with great satisfaction of the bad bedroom they gave Luttrell at Cassiobury, 'a little bedroom they always put him and Ben King into.'[2]

While, however, the Duke of Bedford, Lord John, and Mr. Moore were speculating on these matters, internal jealousies and dissensions were leading to the downfall of the Goderich Administration. Differences, which were irreconcilable, or which Lord Goderich had no power to heal, were

[1] The 'Establishment of the Turks in Europe.'

[2] Lord John had written to Mr. Moore, 'Sydney Smith says Rogers was in very bad humour at Ampthill House. Luttrell was helped to bread sauce before him.' Mr. Rogers, Mr. Moore, Mr. Smith, and Lord John were the closest friends, but the idiosyncrasies of Mr. Rogers were a source of never-failing amusement. Lord John himself said, 'Rogers was so exceedingly sensitive that the most harmless remark offended him.' Lord John has preserved the following anecdote of Mr. Rogers. 'Luttrell and Rogers went one day in a boat on the Thames to see the works which were then preparing for the erection of a new London Bridge. Rogers said, "Some very sensible men think that, if these works are carried into effect, the tide will flow so rapidly under the bridge that dangerous consequences may follow." "My dear Rogers," answered Luttrell, "if some very sensible men had been attended to, we should still have been eating acorns."'

terminated by the resignation of the Prime Minister and the formation of a Tory Government under the Duke of Wellington. Thenceforward politics assumed a new phase. The Tories, on one side, rallied under the Duke and Mr. Peel; while the Whig followers both of Lord Lansdowne and of Lord Grey resumed their natural places on the Opposition benches.

CHAPTER VI.

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

THE formation of the Wellington Administration removed the restraint which Mr. Canning's accession to office had placed on Lord John Russell. Like other members of the Whig party connected with Lord Lansdowne and Lord Holland, he resumed his accustomed attitude of opposition to Ministers. He did not, indeed, reintroduce the comprehensive measure which he had brought forward in 1822 and 1823. His chief efforts in the Parliament of 1826 were devoted to another cause. In the old Parliament, often estranged from his own friends, he had been the advocate of Parliamentary Reform In the new Parliament, in concert with the Whigs, he was the champion of religious liberty.

The question of Roman Catholic Emancipation had been in the front of the Whig programme for twenty-five years ; but, before the old Parliament of 1820 had run its course, a variety of circumstances showed that it was becoming ripe for settlement. The agitation which Mr. O'Connell had already commenced in Ireland was imparting fresh activity to the attack ; the reconstruction of the Liverpool Administration had weakened the party of resistance ; and when, in March 1825, Sir F. Burdett carried an abstract motion for the relief of the Roman Catholics, the Tories, fearing that further resistance was impracticable, endeavoured to arrange a compromise. They proposed that a measure of emancipation should be accompanied with what at the time were called two wings, viz. the disfranchisement of the forty-shilling freeholders and the endowment of the Roman Catholic clergy in Ireland. It was thought, with some reason, that if the numerous freeholders for lives were deprived of their votes, and if the priests were made a little more comfortable, less

danger would result from the presence of Roman Catholics in the two Houses of Parliament.

On the only occasion on which he broke silence in the session of 1825, Lord John supported this compromise.[1] But the famous wings did not aid the passage of the measure; the Duke of York, the heir presumptive to the throne, made a strong speech against it. The Lords, stimulated by the Duke's example, mustered courage to reject it, and emancipation was again lost.

The general election of 1826 did not apparently advance the question; and Lord John's attention in 1827 was temporarily diverted from it to a side issue. By the Corporation Act no person could be appointed to any corporate office who had not in the preceding twelve months, received the sacrament according to the rites of the English Church. By the Test Act no one could receive any office of profit who did not take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, and receive the sacrament. These monstrous provisions, however, could not be enforced in a country where large numbers of pious and excellent persons refused to conform to the services of the Church; and, in consequence, Parliament was accustomed to sanction their evasion by passing annually an Act to indemnify those who had broken the law. In 1827, when the annual Indemnity Bill was before the Commons, Mr. Smith, the member for Norwich, and himself a Dissenter, drew attention to the 'hard, unjust, and unnecessary' law which disabled him from holding any office, 'however insignificant, under the Crown, or from sitting as a magistrate in any corporation, without violating his conscience.' As he sat down, Mr. Whittle Harvey, the member for Colchester, rose and twitted the Opposition with disregarding the substantial claims of the Dissenters, while those of the Catholics were supported year after year with the vehemence of party. Stung by Mr. Whittle Harvey's taunt; Lord John at once rose to express his conviction that 'the grievances of the Protestant Dissenters were not practically so great as those of the Catholics;' and to avow his readiness to move the repeal

[1] Lord John was not in the division on Sir F. Burdett's motion. He was probably in Italy, where he spent the winter of 1824–5.

of these Acts whenever the Dissenters themselves thought that the time had arrived for doing so. In consequence of a request from some London Nonconformists, he deferred 'the Parliamentary discussion of the question' during the session of 1827.[1] But in 1828 he brought forward the whole matter.

In 1745 many Nonconformists came in to assist in supporting the Government. . . . They acted most gallantly in co-operation with the King's forces, and their exertions were crowned with success. What reward does the House suppose was bestowed upon the men who had defended the King, maintained the authority of Parliament, and vindicated the liberty of the country? Did the Crown shower orders and honours upon them? Did Parliament vote to them their thanks? Did the people express to them their gratitude? No such thing; the sovereign gave them no honours, the Parliament no thanks, and the people no gratitude; they received for their glorious services from the munificence of King, Parliament, and people —a full and free pardon. Is anything more wanting to show the absurdity of laws which brand the most loyal of the King's subjects, and inflict penalty on the best deeds of patriotism and courage they can perform? The Act of 1747, so far from being singular, however, has now for eighty-five years been the principle of your legislation on the subject. A pardon, such as it is, not like the Act of 1747, but conditional and incomplete, is passed yearly to forgive good men for doing good service to their country.

And again :—

It is stated in historical works that it was the custom of persons to be waiting in taverns and houses near the church, not going in until service was over. The ceremony used to be called 'qualifying for office;' and an appointed person called out, 'Those who want to be qualified will please to step up this way.' Persons then took the communion for the purpose of receiving office, and with no other intent whatever. Such are the consequences of mixing politics with religion. You embitter and aggravate political dissensions by the

[1] The expression is from a letter of Mr. Morell of Wymondley College, dated June 2, 1827, to Lord John. Mr. Morell deprecated the action of the London Dissenters, 'who had taken upon themselves to act as representatives of the whole body.' Lord John had serious doubts whether he ought not to resign his seat at Bandon on his patron's, the Duke of Devonshire's, appointment to be Lord Chamberlain. But the change of Government in 1828 virtually settled the question.

venom of theological disputes; you profane religion with the vices of political ambition, making it both hateful to man and offensive to God.

In proposing this motion Lord John had not much hope of immediate success. He probably anticipated that, as in the Parliament of 1820 he had been engaged year after year in a struggle for Reform, so in the Parliament of 1826 he would labour session after session in the cause of religious freedom. But to his 'great surprise' he found himself at the close of the evening in a majority of 44.

The result may be stated in Lord John's own words:—

Peel, finding himself defeated, after a vain attempt to avoid a total repeal, proposed a useless and feeble declaration, which the Bishops accepted in the House of Lords, after adding a mischievous barrier against the admission of the Jews, in the words 'on the true faith of a Christian.' The whole of this declaration was repealed in 1868; it had kept out nobody, and its removal will admit nobody.[1]

In this contest the seeds of success had been sown by Lord John; the labour of gathering the harvest had also been his. The conduct of the movement had fallen into his hands, and the compromise which was rejected, and the compromise which was accepted, were refused and taken on his responsibility.

Congratulations flowed in upon him. Mr. Moore wrote—

In writing the other day to one of my Derby friends—one of the worthy and very dissenting Dissenters of that place—I said, 'I am still prouder than ever of having pitted my friend Lord John against the Jeremiads since his late memorable achievement.' Notwithstanding all this, however, I am a little anxious to know that your glory has done you no harm in the way of health, as I see you are a pretty constant attendant on the House; and there is nothing, I fear, worse for a man's own constitution than to trouble himself too much about the constitution of Church and State. So pray let me have one line to say how you are.

Lord John replied from the House of Commons—

My constitution is not quite so much improved as the constitution

[1] *Recollections and Suggestions*, p. 58.

of the country by late events; but the joy of it [*sic*] will soon revive me. It is really a gratifying thing to force the enemy to give up his first line, that none but Churchmen are worthy to serve the State; and I trust we shall soon make him give up the second, that none but Protestants are.

His father wrote to him about the same time—

I send you the 'Journal des Débats,' a review of the translation of your 'Establishment of the Turks,' &c. 'En France vous vous êtes acquis une belle réputation,' as the Frenchman would say. I say in universal language—

Semper honos, nomenque tuum, laudesque manebunt.

Even Grey, who is not much given to panegyric, says you have done more than any man now living; persevere in your labours, without injury to your health, and it matters little whether it is under *this* or *that* Administration that they are brought to a successful issue.

Lady Spencer wrote as follows:—

You must allow me, my dear and excellent friend, to tell you my delight at your success in the most important event of the present time. For assuredly the measure which you have been the means of carrying is the greatest demonstration of the power of liberal opinions and of the increasing good sense of the country that in my long life I have witnessed. This admirable effort is mainly owing to the steady, consistent, and manly line of conduct which you and a few—*a very few*—of your particular associates have pursued 'through good report and through evil report.' And your reward, though long delayed, is beginning to appear. A magnificent one it will truly prove itself to be! The renovation of your country's strength, and the establishment of its power on a foundation which never can fail—the hearty concurrence and unanimity of all the intelligence, ingenuity, and enterprise of its population; for such, I firmly believe, will be the result of fair and liberal dealings with the mass, composed, as it is, of the best materials of any now on the face of the world.

Lord John had now won the greatest victory which the friends of freedom had achieved during the nineteenth century. But his success only stimulated him to further efforts. At the general election of 1826, bribery had been extensively practised both at Penryn and East Retford. Penryn was an old offender. Its corrupt conduct had on two previous occasions

been the subject of investigation, and it had been included among the boroughs whose franchises Lord John had himself desired to suspend in 1820. East Retford was a still more flagrant culprit. Each of its electors was almost openly rewarded by each of its two members with a fee of twenty guineas for his vote. In the course of the session of 1827 Bills were introduced by Mr. Legh Keck, the member for Leicestershire, and Mr. Tennyson, the member for Blechingley, to punish bribery at Penryn by transferring the franchise to the hundred, and to disfranchise East Retford and to transfer its two members to Birmingham. The East Retford Bill was not proceeded with beyond its second reading; but, in committee on the Penryn Bill, Lord John proposed and carried a provision for the disfranchisement of the borough, with a view to transferring its members to Manchester.[1] In 1828 he himself took charge of this Bill; while Mr. Tennyson, who acted in conjunction with him, introduced a companion measure to disfranchise East Retford and to transfer its right of returning members to Birmingham. The Duke of Wellington's Administration was nearly broken up on these proposals. Some members of the Cabinet, adhering to the traditions of the Tory party, desired, instead of disfranchising the boroughs, to throw them into the adjacent hundreds; while other members of it, in closer harmony with the ideas of the age, preferred the proposals of Lord John and Mr. Tennyson. The Cabinet ultimately agreed to disfranchise Penryn and to enfranchise Manchester, but to extend the borough of East Retford to the hundred of Bassetlaw. The House of Commons, which frequently prefers compromise to principle, tacitly accepted this arrangement. Lord John's Bill for disfranchising Penryn and enfranchising Manchester was passed, and the East Retford Bill was reserved to await the decision of the Lords on Penryn. The Peers in 1828 were less favourably disposed to compromise than the Commons. They declined to adopt so great an innovation as the enfranchisement of the largest unrepresented town in the kingdom, and they amended the Bill by extending the right of voting at Penryn to the adjacent hundred. The House of Lords has

[1] The amendment was carried by 124 votes to 69. *Hansard*, N.S. xvii. 1055.

made many mistakes in the present century, but it has never committed a blunder attended with consequences more fatal to its own views. It sacrificed by its vote Lord John's measure, but it secured by it the Emancipation of the Roman Catholics and the passage of Parliamentary Reform.

The first consequence of the vote of the Lords was felt in the Cabinet. The party in the Administration which had desired the disfranchisement of both boroughs naturally declared that the compromise was over, and that it was free to vote for the total disfranchisement of East Retford. Mr. Huskisson, Lord Palmerston, and Mr. Lamb actually did so; and, though Mr. Peel succeeded in defeating them, he did not attempt to conceal his annoyance at their conduct. Mr. Huskisson accordingly thought it right to offer to resign, and the Duke of Wellington, weary of differences which he could not heal, insisted on regarding an offer to resign as the same thing as a resignation, and accepted it. Mr. Huskisson was followed in his resignation by four of his colleagues—Lord Palmerston, Lord Dudley, Mr. Grant, and Mr. Lamb—and the Duke of Wellington was thenceforward at the head of a purely Tory Administration. The vote of the Lords had effected its first consequence—Mr. Canning's friends had been removed from his Majesty's counsels.

It is one thing, however, to accept the resignation of a colleague, it is another to secure the services of a competent successor. In Mr. Huskisson's place the Duke of Wellington selected Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald for the Presidency of the Board of Trade. Mr. Fitzgerald had no particular commercial reputation to justify his appointment. He had one disqualification which ought perhaps to have stopped it. He was member for Clare; and Mr. O'Connell, who had obtained an indisputable power in Ireland, determined on ousting him from his seat. To the dismay of the Tory party, Mr. O'Connell was returned. The Roman Catholic question had obviously entered on a new phase. Parliament still insisted on saying that a Roman Catholic should not cross its threshold, and the Roman Catholic electors of Clare were challenging this decision by sending the ablest Roman Catholic alive as their representative to Westminster.

It was at this moment that Lord John again came forward, and gave notice of an address to the King for the settlement of the question. But the notice produced general remonstrance, and Lord John withdrew it, giving 'way to his friends' opinion without changing his own.'[1] He thus described the reason for his conduct to his friend Mr. Moore:—

Never was such a clamour as was made in the London world against my motion. Ministers, Opposition, Huskisson, and all were frightened at the threats of a few stupid letters. And after all, the whole of my meaning was to say strongly that Government could no longer leave Ireland to go by herself, for it is not, as one of the Popes said of France, 'La buona macchina che anda sola.' What our Ministry will do heaven only knows, but I cannot blame O'Connell for being a little impatient after twenty-seven years of just expectation disappointed. The Duke of Wellington has hitherto thought that a touch of his would make all the world go right,

Multumque priori
Credere fortunæ;

but I expect he has now found a task that makes his cheeks pale and his nights uneasy; although, at the same time, such a message as Fox brought down in 1782 would settle it all at least for twenty years more. You never do justice to that great man.

I am going to take the Carlsbad waters, but hope to be at Bowood for a couple of days in the course of August. Say all you can for me to Mrs. Moore.—Yours ever,

J. R.

The visits both to Carlsbad and Bowood were duly paid; and Lord John subsequently addressed himself with ardour to the cause of Roman Catholic Emancipation.

The events of the session, in which he had himself borne so large a part, the schism in the Administration, and the election of Mr. O'Connell had filled Tories and Protestants with alarm. Identifying themselves both in Ireland and England with the ruling dynasty, and recognising that the House of Hanover had been the constant opponent of concession, they enrolled themselves in Brunswick Clubs, pledged to resist the Emancipation of the Roman Catholics. It was Lord John's desire to meet agitation with agitation, and to form a central

[1] Lord Ellenborough's *Diary*, i. 162.

association for the purpose of organising the country, and of petitioning Parliament in favour of religious liberty. Lord Grenville warmly favoured the proposal; Mr. Stanley and Lord John's immediate friends, Lords Lansdowne and Holland, were also in favour of it. Lord Grey, on the contrary, disliked it, and Lord Althorp shared Lord Grey's opinion. Lord Grey wrote on October 28—

In whatever way the committee or association may be formed, whether its proceedings be public or private, if its object be to set on foot petitions throughout the country, my firm belief is that it will do much more harm than good to the cause. What has happened in Kent[1] is, I fear, much too accurate an example of what may be expected generally in the country. In many counties the moderate Tories, and in some even the violent ones, are, I believe, disposed to be quiet from fear of the opposition which they may meet with, and from the trouble which an active exertion would entail upon them. My advice, therefore, would be to remain strictly on the defensive—to resist, as well as we are able, any measures taken on the other side to promote petitions or Brunswick questions; but not to agitate the question ourselves. This opinion is undoubtedly founded on the belief that, in a great majority of the counties, if convened for the purpose of petitioning, the result would be the same as in Kent. I shall be most happy to find that this opinion is an erroneous one; but, at present, from all the means of information that I possess, my conviction is that nothing could be more hopeless than an attempt to carry this vital question, by the force of public opinion, against the Government and the Court.

Lord John was not entirely convinced.

Althorp: Jan. 4, 1829.

Dear Lord Lansdowne,—I am quite ready to agree with anyone and act with anyone who will make the Catholic question a *sine quâ non*. But as to your second principle of not caring who it may raise to office, I see no necessity of laying down any position of the kind. . . . For my part I see no medium in politics between not caring at all about public matters, and wishing to see them well conducted, and I consider the principle on which Huskisson professed to act last year, of stipulating for certain measures without regard to the men who were to carry them into effect, as a most pernicious innovation on old-established rules for the conduct of statesmen in this

[1] A great Brunswick meeting had been held on Pennenden Heath.

country. The sum of all this is that I shall be prepared when Parliament meets to join a party, I trust a very large one, to carry the Catholic question. And the further such a party will afterwards engage in the defence of public liberty the better. For yourself, I cannot help saying that I sometimes wish the pure gold of your integrity were mixed with a little more alloy of ambition and self-love, for then you might be stamped with the king's head, and pass current throughout the country.—Yours ever,

J. RUSSELL.

No opportunity occurred for testing the comparative worth of Lord John's aggressive proposals and of Lord Grey's cautious abstinence. The refusal of the Tory peers to accept the proposal for the disfranchisement of Penryn and the enfranchisement of Manchester was producing a fresh consequence. It had already led to the disruption of the Ministry, and the election of Mr. O'Connell for Clare; the last of these events was now compelling the leaders of the Tory party to deal with Catholic Emancipation themselves.

Roman Catholic Emancipation, from the form which it took, and from the manner in which it was carried, has a much closer reference to the life of Sir R. Peel than to that of Lord John Russell. Lord John, and the friends with whom he acted, were more anxious to further a policy which they approved than to taunt the Ministers with their inconsistency in proposing it. In consequence, the session of 1829, though it was one of triumph for Liberalism, was one of rest for Liberals, and perhaps there is no period of Lord John's political career which requires less notice.

The session, so far as Lord John was concerned, was remarkable not from what he did, but from what he did not do. The extreme Tories were so angry with the Duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel, that one of them actually asked Lord John to reintroduce his Reform Bill for the sake of embarrassing and punishing the leaders of the Tory party. Lord John himself told the story in 1834, and added that, even with the promise of increased Tory support, he declined 'to embarrass the Government of the Duke by seeking the aid of his ultra-Tory opponents.'

Perhaps, too, while the public were regarding Lord John

as the champion of religious liberty, and were speculating on the progress of Liberal ideas, he himself was occupied with different and even lighter cares. The period, which is now associated with the victory of religious freedom, was with Lord John one of great literary activity. The second quarto volume of the 'Memoirs of the Affairs of Europe' was passing through the press in the autumn of 1828, and was published in the spring of 1829. In the 'Literary Souvenir' of that year, an annual which was edited by Mr. Alaric Watts, the brother-in-law of Mr. Wiffen, the librarian at Woburn, he published anonymously, or rather with the initial 'R.,' and with the address Woburn Abbey, a ballad, 'The Captive of Alhama,' which was copied into the columns of the 'Literary Gazette,' whose editor, 'in paying our tribute of distinction to this elegant recreation,' 'rightly attributed it to Lord John.'[1]

Literary pursuits were not the only occupations which were engaging Lord John's leisure hours. For the first time in his life he was bent on terminating his solitary existence; and rumour was free with the name of one young

[1] Lord John's nearest relatives were of opinion that Lord John never used the initial 'R.,' and thought that the ballad could not be by him. But his authorship is placed beyond dispute by a letter, sold at Messrs. Sotheby's on May 2, 1888, from Lord John to Mr. Watts, in which Lord John says, 'I am glad you like the ballad. If you like you may put R. or J. R. to it, but not my name at full length.' Lord John, in the previous year, had contributed to the *Literary Souvenir* a fable, addressed to Lady Spencer, entitled 'The Bee and the Fly.' See *Life of A. A. Watts*, i. 272. A few lines may be quoted from it:—

'"Twas then the bee, with look sedate,
Spake like a judge upon his fate.
"Poor fluttering thing! Such is the measure
Dealt out to those who live for pleasure.
When gorged with joys, or wise with age,
They seek their limbs to disengage,
Indulgence weakens all their powers;
In useless struggles pass the hours:
They waste in premature decay,
And unregretted pass away.
While we, who still pursue the cause
Of nature's bidding, virtue's laws,
When we have worked from morn to night,
Review our labours with delight.
Health nerves our limbs and sweetens rest,
And all our pleasures keep their zest.'

lady who, it was stated, was on the eve of becoming Lady John Russell. Madame Durazzo wrote to him on March 30, 1829—

. . . It is a pity that the *nice girl* should be so much younger than yourself. Since you are so bent on matrimony, *je souhaite* that you may soon meet with the *rib* that becomes you. I went on thinking *la chose faite* for a whole month, when a letter came to say no. *A la vérité* I felt hurt that you should not have given me intelligence of it, and everybody here wondered. . . . *Addio!* I wish you happiness, and beg not to be entirely forgotten, while I must ever remain, with sincere friendship, your sincerely affectionate,

L. DURAZZO.

Lord John steeled his heart, and resisted the 'nice girl's' fascinations. But he did not abandon his desire for marriage. Before Parliament was prorogued in 1829 he left England, spent a short time at Florence and Genoa, and in August crossed the Alps and settled in Geneva, where his brother, Lord William, was staying. There the society of his brother's family reminded him anew of his own solitary life, and he communicated his feelings to Lady William. For, after he had left Switzerland, his brother wrote to him—

Bessy has been ill, but is now better. Heaven knows when we shall get to Italy. These domestic cares are unknown to you. However, I know they do not frighten you from wishing to engage in them. You are quite right. There is no happiness like that derived from wife and children; it makes one indifferent to all other pleasures. But then beware, don't tumble headlong into marriage. Remember, when once in, you can't get out; and, if it don't suit, it is hell upon earth. You are a man of settled pursuits and habits and must have a wife that will take interest in them. A gadding, flirting, dressing, ball-going wife would be the devil. Nor would one of the new-light ladies be quite the thing. A little good sense, a little money, would be better; not too young either. In short, look before you leap is the advice of an old stager and your sincere well-wisher,

G. W. R.

Fifteen days later, Lord William, writing from Milan, returned to the subject:—

I hear you are bent upon marrying. Why so? you are perfectly happy. Remember the man who was well, would be better, took

physic, &c., &c. Yet, if you can meet with the most amiable of her sex, marry! It is, when happy, the happiest of states. But you can't think how a little money smooths away difficulties and annoyances. Let there be money—in moderation I mean. At all events, nobody wishes you more happiness than your affectionate,

G. W. R.

Lord John's matrimonial projects were not destined to take any definite shape for some years. The 'nice girl,' to whom Madame Durazzo had alluded in the spring, was married in the following year to a gentleman whose age was more suited to her own; and five years were to pass before Lord John even made the acquaintance of the lady who eventually became his first wife. In the meanwhile his interest in politics did not flag. In 1829 Europe, agitated with the clash of arms, was expecting the apparently inevitable collapse of the Turkish Empire. The treaty signed in London two years before had authorised the contracting powers, France, Russia, and England, to exert all the means which circumstances might suggest to their prudence to enforce an armistice between insurgent Greece and her Mahometan sovereign. Under this treaty the battle of Navarino had been fought, which the Ministers had gone out of their way to describe as an untoward event, but which Lord John Russell, with much truer insight, had declared to be 'a glorious victory, and as honest a victory as had ever been gained since the beginning of the world.'[1] It would have been well for Turkey if the Porte could, at the eleventh hour, have taken the lessons of the battle to heart, and have set itself to make terms with the Greeks. Instead of doing so, it ventured on tearing up the treaty with Russia, which it had concluded two years before at Ackermann, and thereby compelled Nicholas to declare war. During this struggle the Tory party was almost unanimous in desiring that the Turks might be enabled to withstand what its members were disposed to regard as a Russian aggression. The Whig party, on the contrary, was divided in its opinions and its sympathies. Some of them agreed with the Tory leader in

[1] In the debate on the Address.

thinking that British interests demanded the maintenance of Ottoman dominion on the Bosphorus. Others, on the contrary, declined to admit that British interests could be identified with the infraction of treaties, or with the retention of a brutal autocracy in some of the fairest portions of Eastern Europe.

Lord John was much too well informed to share the fears or the prejudices of the Tory party. The researches which he had made while he was writing his 'Essay on the Establishment of the Turks in Europe,' had taught him what Turkish rule meant; and he accordingly watched from the first the progress of the war without any anxiety for its remoter consequences. Writing to him in November 1828, Lady Aberdeen, whose husband was then Foreign Minister, said—

Will you come and congratulate Madame de Lieven on the taking of Varna, as I suppose you are nearly as glad as she is, though I cannot divine why.

And nearly a year afterwards, in October 1829, Lord Holland wrote to him—

Dear John,—With nothing to send in return, I must thank you for an excellent letter. It delights the cockles of my heart to find we agree, the more so as the rest of the world is run mad with excessive apprehension of Russia's maritime preponderance and what not. This straightforward administration which, by turning sharp round on the Catholic business, has done so much real good at home, by its byeways and low, not high, ways abroad, has brought us to a pass which is truly pitiable, and if there were no danger would be laughable. We have somehow or another exasperated the two greatest powers on the Continent, viz., the Cabinet of St. Petersburg and the public opinion of France; and we have done so without serving ourselves or our pretended allies, and without ingratiating ourselves either with those we wished well to, or those who are really benefited by the transactions. Neither Turks nor Greeks have to thank us. Your account of Gordon's[1] position is droll enough, and I believe correct; the Government here is equally perplexed. . . . They sneer at the moderation of Nicholas, and manifestly delight in the diatribes of the press, which all concur in miscalling it treachery, perfidy,

[1] Sir Robert Gordon, Lord Aberdeen's brother, had been lately appointed Ambassador at the Porte.

encroachment, and what not. If it is really as it appears, it is not only moderation, but moderation run mad—a contradiction in terms, a solecism in language, and a damned blunder in politics. But though I neither partake of the fears, nor agree with the reasonings, of the Philo-Ottoman patriots, I think I can perceive that some of the glittering magnanimity of the Czar is not sterling gold; and I am not so sorry for it as perhaps I ought to be.

In a later letter on December 6 he added—

I hope Nicholas is not dead, though he deserves death for not entering Constantinople;

while Lord John himself, in the debate on the Address, complained that the Government had not 'firmly pressed on the acceptance of Turkey,' the 'demands of Russia, which he thought were fair and reasonable;' and, on a subsequent occasion, brought forward a motion for the express purpose of obtaining a more liberal form of government and a wider dominion for the new kingdom of Greece.[1]

The session in which these speeches were made opened amidst circumstances of grave anxiety. A period of dull trade and agricultural depression was producing an almost universal distress; and riots and disturbances, attributable to suffering, were occurring both in urban and in rural districts. The people looked to Parliament for some remedy for their misfortunes; and Parliament was in a position which made it powerless for good. Both the great parties in the State were suffering from internal divisions and divided counsels. Old-fashioned Tories were angry with the Duke of Wellington and Mr. Peel for emancipating the Roman Catholics; while the Whigs had never recovered from the schism which had sundered their party into two fragments in 1827. One step towards Whig union was indeed taken in 1830. Lord Althorp, who had expressly declined to do so in 1827,[2]

[1] *Hansard*, xxii. 148, 544.

[2] Lord Althorp wrote to Lord John on August 25, 1827:—

'My dear John,—Tavistock I have always considered a man of excellent judgment, and certainly quite sane. But I am grieved to find by your letter that he must be quite mad to think that I could be thought of as Leader of the House of Commons. I send you back Holland's letter. I agree with every syllable he says respecting me. I could, however, add many better arguments against Tavistock's proposition.'

consented to assume the guidance of the party; which, since 1821, when Mr. Tierney had abdicated the position, had practically remained without a leader.

The Whig party in the House of Commons acquired coherence from this circumstance; it gained confidence from the events of the session. Parliamentary Reform was again brought forward, and became a subject of discussion on three separate occasions. In February, Lord Blandford introduced an elaborate scheme for the disfranchisement of rotten boroughs, the enfranchisement of populous places, and other objects. In May, Mr. O'Connell urged the adoption of triennial Parliaments, universal suffrage, and vote by ballot. Lord John, who had given a conditional support to Lord Blandford's motion, met Mr. O'Connell's proposal with a resolution affirming the expediency of extending the basis of the representation of the people. But his effort was not confined, in this critical session, to the discussion of other people's projects. Early in the session he introduced a Bill to enable or allow Manchester, Leeds, and Birmingham to return members to Parliament. The measure was rejected by 188 votes to 140. The Tory members, who secured a temporary triumph, were, happily for their own comfort, unable to foresee that, one year afterwards, the same member, whose moderate proposal they were contemptuously rejecting, would rise with all the authority of office to introduce the great Reform Bill.

In fact, the commencement of a new reign was about to open a new era in English history. On June 26, 1830, George IV. died; and Ministers decided on winding up the work of the session in order that the dissolution, which under any circumstances was indispensable, might take place as rapidly as possible. They were not suffered to do so without discussion. Lord Althorp desired, and Lord John supported his wish, that the House should at once proceed to settle the new civil list. The new Parliament—so Lord John contended—would be more likely to show complaisance than the old one, with the fear of an immediate dissolution before it. Ministers, however, had their way. Parliament was at once dissolved; the general election took place at a

time when the country was agitated by the news of the Revolution which drove Charles X. from the throne of France; and, in the few constituencies where public opinion could make itself felt, Liberal politicians achieved unexpected and unusual successes.

The rising tide of Liberalism, however, bore no success for Lord John. He could not well return to his nomination borough in Ireland; and he doubted whether he should appeal to his old constituents in Huntingdonshire, or stand for his father's borough in Bedford. His father wrote to him—

My dear John,—I was in such a hurry when I saw you yesterday that I forgot to say anything about Hunts. But Wing thinks that they will nominate you, and Lord Milton thinks the same; *nous verrons*. In the meanwhile, I hope nothing may be done to mar our nominating you for Bedford should necessity require it.

The latter course was taken and Lord John stood for Bedford. Lady Cowper[1] wrote to him in the middle of the election—

I hope you are safe. I am told you might have walked over the course for Huntingdon, and that Lord Russell[2] should have been put up for Bedford.

But safe he was not. Lord Ellenborough wrote in his diary on August 18—

Lord J. Russell is not returned for Bedford; he lost it by one vote.[3] He has published a good address and is evidently very indignant.

Lord John had always one remedy for disappointments of this kind. He turned his back on England, and crossed the Channel. Paris, at that time, just recovering from the effects of the Revolution of July, was an interesting spot for any traveller to go to—and Lord John Russell was no ordinary traveller. He was in communication with the foremost men

[1] Afterwards Lady Palmerston.

[2] The only son of Lord Tavistock, afterwards eighth Duke of Bedford. He had just attained his majority in 1830.

[3] The successful candidates were Messrs. Whitbread and Polhill.

in France, and heard from their lips the history of the extraordinary mistakes which had cost Charles X. his throne, and which had robbed his Minister, the Prince de Polignac, of his liberty. There is still among his papers, in his own handwriting, a short memorandum on the information which he thus received. Other matters, too, were occupying Lord John's attention. The French were so angry with the Minister who was, at any rate technically, responsible for the issue of the *ordonnance* of July, that they were clamouring for the Prince de Polignac's execution. The Prince's danger naturally created a profound sensation in this country. His wife was a daughter of Lord Rancliffe; his sister was married to Lord Tankerville; and Lord John, who had long been the friend of the Rancliffes, and whose favourite cousin, Gertrude, was married to Lord Tankerville's brother, did not require much moving to interest himself in an unfortunate statesman. Lord Holland, however, wrote to him—

Holland House: Sept. 10.

Dear John, ... Pray, in your intercourse with ruling and valuable people, say as much as you can—and all you can say will be truth—of the good impression that clemency to the State prisoners, and especially to Polignac, will leave here. The interest felt about him does not in the least arise from doubt of his folly and political guilt, but from a knowledge of his gentle manners, extensive English connection, and familiarity and intercourse with English society. Poor Lady Tankerville is very wretched about him, and lenity shown him, if it can be shown with any safety to France, will, I am sure, propitiate public opinion, or at any rate beau monde opinion (which always has its weight in London) extremely. . . .—Yours,

VASSALL HOLLAND.

A few days later the following still closer appeal reached Lord John:—

I have by chance heard that you are arrived. I am persuaded that you will think it very natural that I should be most anxious to have a few moments' conversation with you; at the same time it is most essential that it should not be known. Will you therefore, in humanity to a suffering fellow-creature, call at any hour most convenient on Mrs. Porter, Rue de Verneuil No. 31, and have the goodness to be announced as Mr. Browne.

I need not, I am persuaded, offer to Lord John Russell any further apology. My signature will plead my excuse.

MARIE DE POLIGNAC.

September 18, 1830.

Years afterwards Lord John himself told the sequel of the story.

It happened to me to be in Paris soon after the Revolution of 1830 . . . . and . . . . to be asked by some persons very nearly connected with Prince Polignac . . . . to ascertain what was likely to be the issue of his trial. . . . I had sufficient acquaintance with the Ministers and Court of Louis Philippe . . . . to ascertain . . . . that the enlightened Sovereign who now reigns over the French nation contemplated with horror the infliction of any capital punishment. . . . . I took care to convey that information as soon as possible to those who were anxiously awaiting the result of any facts that came to my knowledge. But it was stated to me . . . . that the lives of those unfortunate men . . . . might be sacrificed to the vengeance and fury of a sanguinary mob. It was my fortune to be intimately acquainted, and I say it with pride and gratification, with General Lafayette, then in command of the National Guard of Paris. I wrote to him, and asked him for an interview on a subject of great importance. He did me the honour to come and visit me . . . . and I then told him of the dangers which were apprehended for the lives of the Ministers then upon their trial. He stated immediately his opinion . . . . that the offence which these Ministers had committed was punishable with death. He went on, however, to state that he never would promote . . . . that punishment on those Ministers. And, when I put to him the question 'Is there not danger that the National Guard should be forced and violence committed?' he answered with emotion, 'No! that must not, that shall not be.'[1]

Lord John remained in Paris till November, when events of more immediate importance to himself than the trial of the French Ministers necessitated his return to London. Parliament had met at the end of October, and on November 2 the Duke of Wellington, replying to a declaration of Lord Grey in favour of Reform, had made his famous statement

[1] *Hansard*, xxxiii. 1201. The Prince de Polignac was tried in December and was sentenced to imprisonment for life. He was released in 1836 on condition of his not returning to Paris.

that, if he had to devise a constitution himself, 'his great endeavour would be to form such a legislature as they possessed now.' This unwise eulogy hastened a catastrophe which would perhaps under any circumstances have occurred. Mr. Brougham, fresh from the triumph of carrying Yorkshire, gave notice of a motion for Parliamentary Reform for November 16. The Funds fell. The Ministers, alarmed at rumours of riot, persuaded the King to put off a visit to the City on November 9; and, finally defeated on a motion relating to the civil list on the 15th, placed their resignations in the King's hands on November 16.

On that day, so pregnant with mighty consequences to England, Lord John's friends had already made arrangements for obtaining him a seat in Parliament. Lord Ebrington, the eldest son of Lord Fortescue, had been returned for Devonshire and Tavistock; and, as he elected to sit for the county, a vacancy was created in the borough, which Lord John had represented in the Parliaments of 1812 and 1818. Arrangements were at once made for his election; and, before they were concluded, and while Lord John was canvassing the electors of Tavistock, Lord Grey decided on offering him office. It is, indeed, somewhat remarkable that the man who, by Lord Grey's own admission, had done more than any one, should not have been thought worthy of a seat in the Cabinet. But, in constructing his Government, Lord Grey was more anxious to found it on a broad basis than to promote the rising members of his own party, on whose support he could, under any circumstances, depend. Great, moreover, as were Lord John's Parliamentary services, he had no experience as an administrator, and his health was still so delicate that it was doubtful whether he could discharge the heavy duties of official business while he was subjected to the late hours of the House of Commons. For these reasons some secondary post was thought of for Lord John. It was at first contemplated that he should be Under-Secretary of Foreign Affairs and the mouthpiece of that department in the House of Commons. But, when that arrangement became impracticable, he was ultimately assigned the sinecure office of Paymaster General. How immediately his assistance was thought of will be seen

from the following letter written on the day which succeeded the Duke of Wellington's resignation :—

London : Nov. 17, 1830.

My dear John,—I have had a most gratifying and cordial communication from Lord Grey, which has given me much pleasure. He is endeavouring to form an Administration on the principles of peace, Reform, and economy (this is the basis the King assented to), and should be able to form a strong, honest, and efficient Government on such a basis . . . . I will transcribe what he says in his letter about you :—

'It is a matter of course that I should be anxious to have Lord John's assistance in some situation adequate to his just expectations and talents, and to his power of rendering useful service to the public.'

I have requested Grey to write to you himself. In the event of your accepting office, Adam thinks that the writ might be so far delayed as to avoid the trouble and expense of two elections. . . .

Your affectionate Father,

B.

Lord Althorp wrote on the same day—

My dear John,—Lord Grey desires me to write to you to ask if you will be willing to take office in the Administration which he is forming, such a situation of course being offered to you as your abilities and Parliamentary character entitle you to claim. I have not been able to escape, and have been obliged to sacrifice myself, for to me it is an entire sacrifice. But a difficulty occurred which I did not foresee, and which will only be got over by my taking office. And I hope you will be ready to assist. If I can I will get your writ delayed for a few days.—Yours most truly,

ALTHORP.

Albany : November 17, 1830.

Pray let me have some idea of what you would like.

A third letter came from Lord Tavistock :—

17th.

Dear John,—You will hear from Althorp by this day's post. He has consented with great reluctance to accept office. I believe he will be Chancellor of the Exchequer. Their views for you are the Foreign Office—Under Secretary. But we must have some conversation on the subject as soon as you come to town. Lord Grey, I believe, would do anything that would be most agreeable to you, but I see that they wish you to represent Foreign Affairs in the House of Commons and they think that you would be useful in the

writing part of the department. I hope you will come to no decision in your own mind till I see you. . . .

Almost immediately afterwards, apparently on the next day, Lord Tavistock wrote again :—

Dear John,—I saw Lord Grey to-day by appointment. He informs me that the Foreign Office is now quite out of the question for you. Lords Lansdowne and Holland having declined it, they have given it to Palmerston—not a very popular appointment, I fear . . . .

Lord Grey is in a dreadful state of anxiety and annoyance: thinks he shall break down under his load ; says that Brougham stands between him and rest. They talk of sending Lord Anglesey to Ireland, a popular appointment if our friends had not been almost pledged to abolish the office ; Stanley Secretary. It won't do, I fear. Lord Grey asked me if you would like to be Paymaster. I could give no answer, so you must come and answer for yourself. . . .

Lord John accordingly came to London and agreed on accepting an office which, he may perhaps have recollected with pleasure, had been held by Sir Robert Walpole, Mr. Pelham, Lord Chatham, the first Lord Holland, and Mr. Burke. From London he issued the following address to the electors of Tavistock :—

Gentlemen,—Since I had the honour of paying my respects to you, it has pleased the King to confer upon me the office of Paymaster of the Army, but I have the satisfaction to think that the Ministry which I have thus joined is formed upon the principles to which I have ever been attached. The preservation of peace with foreign Powers, a just and systematic economy at home, and a reform in the state of the representation are the main objects to which, in office or out of office, my votes in Parliament will be directed.

I regret that the urgency of public business will not allow me to be present at the election, but rely with confidence on your indulgence upon this occasion, and trust you will not attribute my absence to any want of respect or regard.—I remain, gentlemen, your faithful obedient servant,

J. RUSSELL.

London : Nov. 23, 1830.

Among the congratulatory letters which he received on his accession to office, he seems to have specially valued, and at any rate he only preserved, the following :—

Sloperton: Nov. 24, 1830.

My dear Lord John,—It is a long time since we have taken any notice of each other; and, if you did not know me not to be a courtier, my choosing this moment to put you in mind of me when you are just become a man in office might look suspicious. But, if ever I did expect anything from anybody in the way of place, that dream is long gone by, and it is far more with fears for them than with hopes for myself that I contemplate the accession of so many friends to office. For myself my 'crust of bread and liberty' is all I have or want; and, while a Whig Administration is not likely to butter the former for me, it may but too much embarrass the latter by making me silent (for friendship's sake) when a good grumble would be a relief to me. I shall, however, try hard not to abuse you, though that you'll all want it before long I have very little doubt. . . . God bless you, my dear Lord John, and there are few in the world that wish you more heartily every earthly blessing than I do; and the only place I desire of you, or ever shall, is the little corner in that honest heart of yours which is, I believe, now mine, and which (though I treat it so like a sinecure by never writing to you) you cannot doubt that I value . . . Ever yours most truly,

THOMAS MOORE.

CHAPTER VII.

THE REFORM ACT.

THE office to which Lord John Russell was appointed in 1830 on the formation of Lord Grey's Administration, was one which did not impose many duties on its holder. Lord John said himself—

> The work was all done by the cashiers, and the only official act of any consequence that I performed was the giving allotments of garden ground to seventy old soldiers.

If this, however, were the solitary result of four years' official labour, the action was one to which Lord John long looked back with satisfaction. Immediately after his return to London in 1841, after his second marriage, his young wife wrote—

> He took me to see his gardens at Chelsea, a piece of waste ground, adjoining the hospital, which he proposed giving to the old pensioners for gardens. He was much opposed, but persisted, and it succeeds admirably—one hundred and thirty poor old men, each a plot of his own, which no doubt keeps them many an hour from the gin-shops. The neatness of the gardens—some vegetables, some flowers, according to the owner's taste—and the grateful manner of the old soldiers to Lord John show that he was right.[1]

The not very onerous duties attached to the office were rewarded in 1830 with a substantial salary of 2,000*l.* a year, and with a pleasant house in Whitehall. But the most rigid economist had no objection to make to this arrangement. Even the editor of the Black Book, instead of criticising the lavishness of Lord John's salary, praises his services; and posterity, thankful for what it owes to him, may rejoice that the first four years of his official life—while his health was still fragile—were passed in an office which involved no harder

[1] These gardens still continue.

labours than the appropriation of some waste ground to Chelsea Pensioners.

The house, which was attached to the Pay Office, necessitated some change in Lord John's way of living. His headquarters had hitherto been either at the Hundreds Farm at Woburn,[1] which had been in his occupation from 1820 to 1832, or in lodgings. He had lodged successively at 66 South Audley Street, at 11 Old Burlington Street, and at 19 Half Moon Street; and he was still nominally living in Half Moon Street at the time of his accession to office. But he had been accustomed to pass much more time either in travelling[2] or in his friends' houses than in the occupation of

[1] The family tradition is that, when Lord John gave up the farm, the stock upon it was reduced to one hen. In the farmhouse Lord John kept his library, and thither he retired for quiet study. Sir Robert Inglis used to visit it 'as the place in which the mind was formed.'

[2] The previous chapters have given some glimpses of Lord John abroad. It is probably impossible to give a complete list of his journeys, but it may be stated that he was constantly abroad seeking either health or relaxation. Writing to Mr. Moore in April 1821, he said, 'Your offer of a bed at Meudon' (Mr. Moore was still living in seclusion in France) 'is one that I hope to accept more than once in the summer. You will, I dare say, be very poetical there, and I shall be very well in my stomach, which is more prosaic.' Accordingly, at the close of the session of 1821, Lord John went to Paris, arriving there on June 13, and remaining there till September 24: cf. Moore's *Memoirs*, III, 241, 279, 281. He apparently meditated returning there early in 1822, but was prevented doing so by ill-health, for he wrote to Mr. Moore in January, 'I am not going to Paris; but I shall do little here. I mean to amuse myself this year and perhaps the following.' Accordingly in 1822 he took very little part in Parliament; and was even prevented by the state of his health from presiding in April at a great Reform dinner in London. At the close of the session of 1822 he went down to Endsleigh, where his father was detained by 'a very dangerous attack arising from blood in the head.' In the summer of 1823 he contemplated visiting Ireland in Mr. Moore's company, but the arrangement fell through; partly in consequence of the Duke's continued illness, and Lord William Russell's return to England. But in the autumn of 1823 he was again abroad for six weeks. He returned to the Continent in the autumn of 1824; he was abroad in the spring of 1825; and in October 1825 he refused a proposal of Mr. Moore's for a fresh visit to Paris by alleging 'My bones, my eyes, and my mind are all tired of travelling, and I want a little rest.' And again a few days afterwards, 'What keeps me from Paris is a surfeit of travelling, and the knowledge how cold it will be coming back. But this does not seem to stop you.

> '"Quin etiam hiberno moliris sidere classem
> Et mediis properas aquilonibus ire per altum."'

But, tired as he evidently was, Lord John again altered his mind; and, at the

his Bedfordshire farm or of his rooms in London; and, even when he was in London, he was perhaps as much at Holland House as at his own lodgings. An official residence, therefore, made a change in the habits of his life; and, instead of solely enjoying the pleasure of society at other people's tables, he began to exercise a hospitality of his own. On Saturday, June 11, 1831, he gave the first of the many dinner parties at which he subsequently delighted to collect his political and other friends.[1]

Lord John, on learning that he was entitled to an official residence, offered three-fourths of it to his brother Lord William. But the answer, which is in Lady William's handwriting, but in which his brother had apparently a share, will tell the result:—

Geneva: Dec. 11, 1830.

Clarissime Frater,—This moment I receive your letter of November 26, from somebody's house in Burlington Street; it has been sent to me from Genoa. It contains the offer of your house at Whitehall alluded to in your letter to Gulielmus, which allusion I have thanked you for *imo de pectore* in the letter written I believe yesterday. But this letter which I now answer contains facts and *éclaircissements*. I refuse your house with the same sentiments of gratitude I accepted. We won't come to England now positively; and, if you have tenants in these hard times, take them in and don't keep the mansion open for us. I thought it was yours adhesively, so that *bon gré mal gré* you were obliged to live in it, and, as you are not yet married (though I am sure your place will lead to it) I had no scruple in occupying fraternally three parts of the bachelor's home. But, as you can get rid of it, it alters the case. . . Understand me well, dear man, and don't be stupid. I am just as thankful to you as if I lived in your

request of the Duke of Bedford, who was passing the winter in France, paid a three weeks' visit to Paris in January 1826. His visit to the Continent in the autumn of that year has already been related; as well as his later visits in 1829 and 1830.

[1] The party consisted of Lady Hardy and her daughters, Lord Seaford, Lord Fordwich, his brother (I presume the late Lord Mount Temple), and Mr. Moore. Lady Hardy was the widow of Sir Thomas Hardy—the 'Anchor, Hardy, anchor'—and the daughter of Lord Berkeley. She had three daughters, who were probably all at Lord John's dinner. She was subsequently married to another of Lord John's guests—Lord Seaford, a title which, on his death, was merged in the older barony of Howard de Walden. The list of the guests will be found in Moore's *Memoirs*, vi. 200.

house, and pocketed half your salary to boot, but I won't hear of it now.

Lord and Lady William accordingly remained abroad. But Lord William was Lord John's occasional visitor in London.

In the meanwhile the new Administration had been seriously addressing itself to the task which it had undertaken.

Lord Durham,[1] by Lord Grey's desire, invited me to consult with him on the formation of a committee for the purpose of framing a plan [of Parliamentary Reform]. Lord Durham proposed that the Duke of Richmond should be a member of the committee; but, as the Duke had never been a Reformer, I objected to this proposal, and we agreed to invite Sir James Graham and Lord Duncannon to form with us a committee for the proposed purpose. Lord Durham and Sir James Graham were in the Cabinet: Lord Duncannon and I were not. Lord Althorp was not a member of the committee. An outline of a plan of Reform was laid by us before that committee and with some alterations adopted by them. On the proposition of Lord Durham [and against the earnest advice of Lord John] vote by ballot was added to the outline, and the whole scheme was submitted to Lord Grey.[2]

The plan, which was thus drawn up, proposed the disfranchisement of all boroughs with less than 2,000 inhabitants; the semi-disfranchisement of all boroughs with less than 4,000 inhabitants; the extension of the franchise to 20*l.* householders in boroughs; to 10*l.* copyholders in counties; the grant of members to populous towns, and of additional members to the more populous counties. It further proposed the enforcement of residence, the registration of voters, the adoption of the ballot, an increase in the number of polling booths, the taking of the poll in the hundreds or divisions of counties, and the limit of the duration of each Parliament to five years.[3] In deference to the objections of

[1] Lord Durham was Privy Seal, and son-in-law to Lord Grey.

[2] *Recollections and Suggestions*, p. 69. A copy of the draft plan, with the alterations made in it, is given in the Introduction, p. xxxvi, to the edition of the *Essay on English Government* published in 1865, and in the concluding chapter of the edition of the same book published in 1872.

[3] This language is almost literally taken from my *History of England*, vol. ii. p. 638. A 50*l.* household franchise for counties (the Chandos Clause as it was

Lord Grey, the ballot was struck out of the scheme; in consequence of the criticism of the Cabinet the borough franchise was extended to 10*l.* householders in boroughs. With these exceptions the Cabinet substantially approved the scheme of the committee, and decided on confiding its introduction to Lord John Russell.

In an historical sense the speech which Lord John made in introducing the first Reform Bill was not merely the most important that he had ever delivered; it was the most noteworthy he ever made. But, from a literary point of view, it was inferior to some of his former, as well as to some of his later speeches. It was perhaps inevitable that this should be so. The orator derives his inspiration from his audience; and, though some men may be kindled into passion by opposition, most speakers require the sustenance of sympathy. And sympathy was the last thing which Lord John Russell had to expect from the audience that he was addressing. As the extent of the scheme was gradually unfolded, the alarm of the Tories was partially allayed by the apparent hopelessness of the task of the Minister; they burst into what one of them, Mr. Croker, called shouts of derision,[1] and men on both sides were of opinion that, if Mr. Peel had risen at once and declined to discuss 'so mad and revolutionary a proposal,' he would have succeeded in stopping the introduction of the Bill.

But the Tories did not divide. They went on debating Lord John's proposal for nine nights. They proved to their own satisfaction that the Bill was full of anomalies; but their arguments had the fatal defect that they did not convince any one but themselves. There are moments, in the history of every nation, when argument is drowned by the determination of a people; and the closing words of Lord John Russell's speech had struck a chord which vibrated more truly with the

called) was subsequently added in opposition to Lord John by the House of Commons.

[1] Sir Denis le Marchant uses the same phrase. Lord John himself said, 'A noble lord cheered me so vociferously that I was myself inclined to doubt his meaning. I found afterwards that his cheers were meant derisively, to show his thorough conviction of the absurdity and impracticability of my proposals.'

times than all the notes of Mr. Croker's declamation. 'To establish the constitution on a firm basis,' so he had concluded—

you must show that you are determined not to be the representatives of a small class or of a particular interest; but to form a body who, representing the people, springing from the people, and sympathising with the people, can fairly call on the people to support the future burthens of the country, and to struggle with the future difficulties which it may have to encounter; confident that those who call upon them are ready to join them heart and hand, and are only looking, like themselves, to the glory and welfare of England.

Outside opinion, encouraged by such words as these, was in fact making itself felt inside the House of Commons; and a motion which, on its first introduction, might possibly have been rejected, was carried at the close of the debate without a division.

The second reading of the Bill was fixed for March 21. The motion was made by Lord John without any observations. But he wound up the debate on the part of the Administration; and, in a full House of 607 members, the second reading of the great measure was carried by a majority of one vote. Lord John himself wrote in his old age [1]—

I never saw so much exultation expressed in the House of Commons as upon that occasion. One member threw his hat up in the air, and the vociferous cheering was prolonged for some minutes.

Lord John in his enthusiasm wrote to Mr. Moore—

Whitehall: March 31.

Dear Moore,—Cardinal de Retz said that, if he had had the King on his side a single fortnight, things would have turned out otherwise. So I say that, if we have the King with us another fortnight, we shall be sure of our game. Already capitulation is spoken of, and many who voted against us on the second reading now speak only of altering some of the clauses. It is, to be sure, a wonderful change. I can hardly believe it myself. But you know that I am apt to be sanguine.—Yours truly,

J. R.'

[1] *Recollections and Suggestions*, p. 73.

The result proved that he was over-sanguine. In his own words—

The indisposition of the House was soon manifested. Upon a resolution moved by General Gascoigne that the number of members for England and Wales should not be diminished, this latent hostility burst out . . . a majority of eight voting in favour of General Gascoigne's motion.

Upon this event it became the duty of Lord Grey and his colleagues to consider seriously their position. They had brought forward a great measure affecting the constitution of the country and the course of legislation for generations to come. They could neither tamely abandon their situation nor allow their measure to be frittered away, and rest contented with the fragments of a plan, the whole of which had been enthusiastically accepted by the country. It was manifest that the existing House of Commons would endeavour to destroy in detail that which they had sanctioned in the bulk. It was evident that the country was ready to follow Lord Grey, and to adopt his measure as a satisfactory settlement of a question which, since 1780, had always been in the mind of Liberal politicians, and which was now rooted in the heart of the people.

Lord Grey consequently advised the King to dissolve Parliament, and the King adopted his advice. He even consented to stop an inconvenient debate in the House of Lords by going down to Westminster and proroguing Parliament in person.

It is hardly too much to say that the dissolution, which immediately followed, found Lord John the hero of the hour. There was no longer any question of his taking refuge in an Irish borough, or of appealing for a seat to the few freeholders who still maintained a nominal independence at Tavistock. The largest counties, the most populous boroughs, would have all rejoiced in his candidature, and, wherever the people were able to assert their power, would enthusiastically have carried his election.

Two of the greatest counties in England, Devonshire and Lancashire, specially claimed his assistance. Lancashire at that time was represented by Mr. Stanley, the Chief Secretary for Ireland, and Mr. Wilson Patten;[1] Devonshire by Lord

[1] The present Lord Winmarleigh.

Ebrington and Sir Thomas Acland. All four members had voted for the second reading of the Bill; but Sir Thomas Acland and Mr. Wilson Patten had supported General Gascoigne's motion. Both from Devonshire and Lancashire came requisitions or letters inviting Lord John to stand for these counties, while Lord Holland urged him to take a bolder course and attack the strongest of Tory strongholds, Buckinghamshire. Lord John naturally decided to select the county of Devon, with which he was so closely connected by birth and association. Buckinghamshire, accordingly, was left to send a Tory member to Westminster, and Lancashire to return its two old members unopposed.

The new Parliament was summoned to meet on June 14, 1831, and ten days afterwards Lord John rose to introduce the second Reform Bill. But the circumstances under which he spoke were widely different from those with which he had been surrounded three months before. Lord Grey had at last recognised his superiority and claims, and admitted him to the Cabinet. He spoke, therefore, with the authority which attaches to Cabinet rank. He spoke, moreover, with the knowledge that the nation had pronounced decisively for the policy which he was advocating, and that the Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill had become the object and the ultimatum of every patriot. In March he had been nervously apprehensive of the reception which awaited him. In June he adopted a higher tone:—

> I trust that on this occasion gentlemen will so far favour me as not to repeat the cheers [1] and gestures with which they thought that this measure was at once to be driven out of the House and scouted by the ridicule of the great party that was here congregated and banded together against it.

The measure which he had to announce was substantially the same measure which he had introduced in March. The Administration adhered to the principle that boroughs with less than 2,000 inhabitants should be disfranchised, and with

[1] Many of Lord John's speeches were republished, though I doubt any of them having been re-edited. Probably in this passage 'cheers' is a misprint for 'jeers.'

less than 4,000 should be deprived of one member, and though in the interval one or two little places had been able to show that they contained a few more houses than had been imagined, and had consequently been able to extricate themselves from Schedule B, or to wriggle from extinction in Schedule A to mutilation in Schedule B, the Bill remained in principle as in substance the same as before. The Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill had been the cry at the election. The Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill, was the reply of the Government.

The confidence of the Ministers was justified by the event. The first Reform Bill had been read a second time by a majority of only one vote. The second Reform Bill was read a second time by a majority of 136 votes. But the labours of the Government were only beginning. The Opposition, wholly unable to contest the principle of the Bill, was resolute in discussing and objecting to its details. For forty nights the long and weary wrangle was protracted, and the Bill was only finally passed on September 21 by 345 votes to 236.

Throughout this debate labours of an excessive, and of, at that time, unprecedented character fell on the resolute but weakly statesman who had charge of the Bill. Lord John, indeed, derived such assistance from Lord Althorp as has seldom been rendered by one Minister to a colleague.[1] But the toil was greater than had, up to that time, ever fallen on any one person. How the tedious discussion was protracted night after night in the sultry atmosphere of August; how the dawning day frequently broke on members still wrangling over little points which they had commenced discussing the night before; how the people, irritated at the scene, clamoured for speed; how the Tories, foreboding their own ruin, struggled for delay—these are incidents which have been told and retold. It is sufficient to say that throughout the whole of these debates, Lord John displayed knowledge, firmness, readiness,

[1] Throughout the Reform Bill debate Lord John and Lord Althorp were inseparable. They were so much accustomed to be together that Lord John told Mr. Moore that on one occasion, when Lord Althorp was not present, some one asked him whether he had a snuff-box and he answered, 'No, but Althorp has.'—Moore's *Memoirs*, vi. 290.

dignity, and good humour, which naturally raised his own reputation and facilitated the progress of the measure.

His chief labours were for the moment over. On September 22, in company with Lord Althorp, he had the satisfaction of carrying the Bill, which he had successfully piloted through all its stages in the Commons, to the Lords. A formal proceeding was on this occasion raised into a great political demonstration. Nearly 200 earnest Liberals [1] accompanied their leader, and, in defiance of the rules of the assembly into whose portals they had penetrated, broke out into cheering when Lord John Russell handed the Bill to the Lord Chancellor. The greatness of the occasion, indeed, influenced Peers and Commoners, and, in the language of contemporary reporters, 'words of mere form and ceremony, which no one perhaps ever thought of listening to before, were heard with breathless silence.' Four days afterwards the two members who had been the chief actors at this significant scene, were made the heroes of a more remarkable demonstration. On September 24 the Reformers in the House of Commons gave a great banquet at the Thatched House Tavern to their two leaders, and the guests of the evening were received with an enthusiasm which proved the popularity of their principles and the admiration of their followers.

The House of Lords would have acted wisely if it had appreciated the significance of these demonstrations, and have adopted a policy which it was powerless to resist. But perhaps it could hardly have been expected to agree at the first summons on a policy of self-effacement. It is too frequently forgotten, by those who comment on events of this kind, that the whole political power of England was virtually concentrated in 1831 in the hands of two or three hundred individuals, who returned a majority of the House of Commons, and sat in large numbers in the House of Lords. If the oligarchic garrison had been absolutely of one mind the Reform Bill could never have been carried without bloodshed. Happily, in 1831, a large number of the borough owners were in favour of Reform, and consented to allow their own nominees to vote

[1] So Sir Denis le Marchant says (*Spencer*, p. 345). *Hansard* says upwards of one hundred (vol. vii. p. 479).

for the Bill. The votes of the county members and of the few members who represented popular constituencies proved under these circumstances sufficient to turn the scale. But the oligarchic garrison which sat in the House of Lords was insensible to the influences which had moved the House of Commons. On October 7 it threw out the Bill by a majority of 199 votes to 158. Perhaps the Lords who composed the majority failed to see the full significance of the division. It brought the country to the verge of civil war.

In one sense, indeed, it would be almost possible to contend that civil war actually broke out in consequence of this division. Riots occurred in London and the provinces. The Duke of Wellington's windows were broken. Lord Londonderry was attacked by the people and seriously hurt; Nottingham Castle was burned to the ground; and, before the end of October, Bristol was in possession of a mob which treated it as, forty years afterwards, Paris was treated by the Commune. More significant than these disturbances was the attitude of the great meetings which were everywhere summoned to denounce the Lords and to support the Administration. At Birmingham in particular, the headquarters of the Political Union, a gathering which was computed to comprise 150,000 persons voted an address to the Crown expressing alarm at the awful consequences which might ensue from the failure of Reform, and praying the King to create as many peers as might be necessary to carry the measure. The persons present pledged themselves to pay no taxes if Reform were not passed, and in the meanwhile they accorded their thanks to Lord Althorp and Lord John Russell.

Lord John replied in a letter which became famous.

> I beg to acknowledge with heartfelt gratitude the undeserved honour done me by 150,000 of my fellow-countrymen. Our prospects are obscured for a moment; but, I trust, only for a moment. It is impossible that the whisper of 'a faction' should prevail against the voice of a nation.

No neater phrase was ever turned off a literary anvil. The only question was whether its use by a Cabinet Minister was justifiable or wise. There is a tradition, which on the whole is salutary, that in moments of excitement the King's

Ministers may be more usefully employed in smothering the embers than in fanning the flame. So thought the King, who expressed his strong objection to the phrase.[1] So thought Tories like Sir Henry Hardinge and Sir Richard Vyvyan, who brought the language before the House of Commons, and accused its author of supporting the illegal resolutions of the Birmingham Political Union and of calling the majority of the House of Lords a faction. Lord John Russell was no coward;—Mr. Sydney Smith said that he was ignorant of moral fear;—and he at once repeated and defended the language which he had used. But he explained that the word in his letter which had given most offence was not intended to include the whole majority in the House of Lords. There was a faction in the Lords which had swelled the majority, but the majority was not in itself a faction—an explanation to which there was only one objection: in extracting the sting, it had blunted the point, of the writer's apophthegm.

[1] *Correspondence of Earl Grey with William IV.*, i. 387. To the King's remonstrance Lord John replied as follows: 'Lord John Russell presents his humble duty to your Majesty, and is extremely concerned that any expression of his should have given your Majesty offence. The letter referred to was written chiefly with a view of impressing on the excited population of Birmingham the belief that the Reform for which they were so anxious was postponed and not defeated. And he has since received a letter from Birmingham from a dissenting minister of that place, who does not belong to any political union or society, declaring that the letters written by Lord Althorp and himself contributed in a great degree to prevent acts of violence against persons of property. At the same time Lord John Russell does not wish to justify to your Majesty the expression in question. Although not intended to apply to the majority of the House of Lords, it was certainly a phrase which, had he not written in the first moments of disappointment at the rejection of a measure the object of so much labour and such protracted discussion, he would not have used. Lord John Russell is fully sensible that the present interval is one which all his Majesty's advisers must wish to be one of tranquillity and reflection—a feeling in which he participates as strongly as any of them, and on which he relies for the future progress of a measure of wise and constitutional reform.—Whitehall: October 18, 1831.' The King replied: 'St. James's: October 19, 1831.—The King hastens to acknowledge the receipt of Lord John Russell's very proper and highly satisfactory letter of yesterday; and his Majesty assures him that, while he gives him great credit for the mild and gentlemanly feeling with which he has met the communication of his Majesty's notice of the unguarded expression he used in his letter to Mr. Attwood, he rejoices to find in his letter to his Majesty so decided a concurrence in his wish that the present interval should be one of tranquillity and reflection.—William R.'

This debate gave some evidence of the excitement which was stirring the nation to its depths, and which would have been even greater if the attitude of the Commons had not partially modified the effect of the division in the Lords. On the Monday which succeeded it, Lord Ebrington, Lord John's colleague in Devonshire, brought forward a resolution lamenting the fate of the Reform Bill, and asserting the unlimited confidence of the Commons in the integrity, perseverance, and ability of those Ministers who, in introducing it and conducting it, had so much consulted the best interests of the country. The motion, which was carried by a large majority, was the first instance in English history of the Commons enabling an Administration to escape from the consequences of a vote of the Lords. But for Lord Ebrington's motion Ministers could not have avoided tendering their resignation to the Crown, and of surrendering office to their opponents. Lord Ebrington gave them the opportunity of avoiding this course; and made it thenceforward certain that, whatever else the Lords might technically be able to do, no vote at which they might arrive could alone be fatal to the fortune of a Ministry. Sustained by Lord Ebrington's resolution, the Whig Ministers of 1831 were able to disregard the vote of the Peers, to wind up the business of the session, and to announce that, after a few weeks' recess, Parliament would again be called together to reconsider the Reform Bill.

Thus it came to pass that, on December 12, for the third time in 1831, Lord John rose to introduce the Reform Bill.[1] A circumstance for which the Minister was not responsible necessitated a slight alteration in the principle on which the Bill was prepared. The Census of 1831 had been taken; its results were known; they could not be ignored in framing the measure. Ministers, indeed, hesitated to accept these returns as conclusive evidence of the population of the smaller boroughs. They felt that people residing in boroughs whose

[1] Sir D. le Marchant says that 'at five o'clock the Speaker looked at the Cabinet bench for Lord John Russell to begin the debate; but he was absent, and half an hour passed away before he made his appearance, looking very pale, and, as I was informed, feeling very ill.'—*Life of Earl Spencer*, p. 378.

population approached the magic numbers of two or four thousand would have been subjected to an almost irresistible temptation to press a few visitors into their houses on the Census night. And they accordingly instructed a competent officer to prepare two lists of boroughs—one for disfranchisement, the other for semi-disfranchisement—basing his report on the number of houses in each borough and the amount of assessed taxes paid in it. The officer selected for this duty, Lieutenant Drummond, was well known afterwards for his services in the Irish Office. The principles on which he acted may still be read in his biography. He prepared a list of fifty-six boroughs for total, and of thirty other boroughs for semi-disfranchisement; and the Ministers acted on his report and framed the third Reform Bill accordingly.

One other alteration of importance was made in the measure. The former Bills had contemplated a considerable reduction in the numbers of the House of Commons. The new Bill made no alteration in its numbers. This circumstance increased the efficiency of the measure, since by enabling the Administration to confer additional members on populous places, it *pro tanto* decreased the voting power of the smaller places which had escaped the meshes of Schedules A and B.

The debates on the third Reform Bill were not protracted to the ridiculous extent which had wearied both Parliament and public in the preceding summer. Read a first time on the 12th, it passed its second reading on December 17; and Ministers, satisfied with the progress which they had thus made, suffered the House to adjourn for a well-earned holiday. After the recess twenty-two nights' work enabled the Government to carry the Bill through committee. On March 22, 1832, it was read a third time, and on the following day it was passed.

During the whole of these discussions the heat and burden of the affray had fallen on Lord Althorp and Lord John. Night after night these two had borne almost alone the task of defending both the principles and the details of the Bill. As the result of their labours Lord John was able to say on its final stage that—

They were now about to take it up to the other House of Parliament as complete in its integrity and as full in its efficiency as when it was first introduced to the notice of the House.[1]

For himself,

He was convinced that, if Parliament should refuse to entertain the measure, it would place in collision that party which opposed all Reform . . . and that which desired Reform extending to universal suffrage. The consequence of this would be that much blood would be shed in the struggle between the contending parties, and he was perfectly persuaded that the British constitution would perish in the conflict.

This warning, however, had no influence with the Tories. Mr. Goulburn at once declared that

The Bill was pregnant with danger to almost every interest in the State. Indeed, the only chance of salvation which the country now had was that this Bill, though sent from the House of Commons, might never be passed into a law by the assembly to which it was now going.

Words such as these, uttered by a statesman who had held high and responsible office, held out little hope of peace, and Ministers awaited accordingly with undisguised anxiety the decision of the Lords. Happily for Lord John his temperament always enabled him to shake off the cares of business during the intervals of leisure, and, on the completion of his own labours, he went down to Woburn for quiet and fresh air. He returned to town at the beginning of April, and on April 6, three days before the debate on the second reading in the Lords, assembled a company of choice spirits at breakfast at his own residence. Those old official rooms had perhaps never before rung with such genuine laughter, excited by such boisterous fun; the humour of some of the sayings first uttered at that breakfast table is still alive, and three of the company who left together laughed all the way to Cockspur Street, where they were 'all three seized with such convulsions of cachinnation [that they were obliged to separate] and reel each his own way with the fit.'[2]

[1] *Hansard*, xi. 853.

[2] Moore's *Memoirs*, vi. 263. The company consisted of Lady Hardy and one of her daughters, Lord William Russell, Moore, Rogers, Luttrell, and Sydney

Yet the circumstances were grave enough to check hilarity. It is true that in the week that succeeded Lord John's breakfast party the Lords consented to read the Reform Bill a second time. But Ministers who were behind the scenes knew that the second reading of the measure was not the most critical stage, and they dreaded the alterations which might be made in the Bill in committee. Their fears were well founded. On May 7 Lord Lyndhurst moved the postponement of the disfranchising clauses till the enfranchising clauses had been considered, and carried his motion against the Government by 151 votes to 116.

The immediate consequence of the vote [wrote Lord John[1]] was a meeting of the Cabinet to consider their new position. With the exception of the Duke of Richmond, the Cabinet were unanimous in thinking that no course was left to them but that of proposing to the King to sanction a creation of peers sufficiently numerous to overbear the opposition of the Lords. The King, however, shrank from the alternative now proposed to him. Lord Lyndhurst was sent for, and informed that the King was determined, if possible, to form a Government on the principle of carrying an extensive reform in the representation of the people. The Duke of Wellington informed Lord Lyndhurst that he would endeavour to form a Government in compliance with the King's wishes. But Sir Robert Peel declined to make himself responsible for a Bill which, in his opinion, as he had often and publicly declared, would entail great calamities on the country.

The excitement throughout the country caused by the knowledge that the Whig Ministers had resigned, and that a Tory Government was in process of formation, made the Duke of Wellington's attempt hopeless. Lord Ebrington carried an address imploring 'his Majesty to call to his councils such persons only as will carry into effect, unimpaired in all its essential provisions, that Bill for reforming the

Smith. It was at this breakfast that Sydney Smith told the story of Leslie going to Jeffrey to explain some point in an article about the North Pole, and of Leslie complaining that Jeffrey had exclaimed impatiently 'Oh, damn the North Pole.' Sydney Smith consoled Leslie by telling him in confidence that he himself had once heard Jeffrey speak disrespectfully of the Equator.

[1] The text is compressed from Lord John's own account in *Recollections and Suggestions*, p. 100 *sq.*

representation of the people which has recently passed the House of Commons.' And on the following Monday, May 14, Mr. Baring, who was supposed to have accepted office in the new Ministry, intimated clearly that the attempt to form a Cabinet would not be proceeded with.[1]

This confession forced the King to recall his old Ministers, and the Cabinet unanimously resolved that Lord Grey should not return to office unless he were 'armed with the power to create peers in a number sufficient to carry the Bill should any of its essential provisions be interfered with in its further progress through the House of Lords.' This power was not exercised. The King used his private influence to secure the passage of the measure, and a sufficient number of Tory peers were induced to stay away, and thus render the opposition of the remainder nugatory. Lord John thought it very questionable 'whether the manner in which the vote of the House of Lords was nullified by the compulsory absence of a great many of the majority was not more perilous for their authority than the creation of peers which the Cabinet of Lord Grey proposed.' And he went on to declare, in a passage which shows how much more clearly he understood the principles of constitutional government than most of his contemporaries :—

> It seems to me that a House of Lords sympathising with the people at large, and acting in concurrence with the enlightened state of the prevailing wish, represents far better the dignity of the House, and its share in legislation, than a majority got together by the long supremacy of one party in the State, eager to show its ill-will by rejecting Bills of small importance, but afraid to appear, and skulking in clubs and country houses, in face of a measure which has attracted the ardent sympathy of public opinion.[2]

Tory peers, however, 'skulked in clubs and country houses, and the Bill passed triumphantly through committee without much debate, and with no important alteration. It was read a

[1] It was in this debate that Lord John, after paying a high compliment to Sir Robert Peel, said that 'he was sure that the Right Hon. Baronet would not form part of a Cabinet into which honour could not enter.'—*Hansard*, xii. 930. Cf. *Recollections and Suggestions*, p. 107.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 110.

third time by a majority of eighty, and on June 5 Lord John had the satisfaction of asking the Commons to agree to the amendments, which were little more than formal and verbal, made by the Lords. Two days afterwards the Bill received the royal assent.[1]

Lord John's share in the Reform Act was celebrated by the late Lord Lyttelton in the following verses :—

In England's worst days, when her rights and her laws
Were spurned by a Prince of the fell Stuart line,
A Russell stood forth, to assert her lost cause,
And perish'd, a martyr at liberty's shrine.
The smell of that sacrifice mounted to Heaven ;
The cry of that blood rose not thither in vain ;
The crime of the tyrant was never forgiven ;
And a blessing was breathed on the race of the slain.
Dethroned and degraded, the Stuart took flight,
He fled to the land where the Bourbon bore sway,
A curse clung to his offspring, a curse and a blight,
And in exile and sorrow it wither'd away.
But there sprang from the blood of the martyr a race
Which for virtue and courage unrivall'd has shone,
Its honours still worn with a patriot grace
Still loved by the people, revered by the throne.
And see where in front of the battle again
A Russell, sweet liberty's champion, appears ;
While myriads of freemen compose his bright train,
And the blessing still lives through the long lapse of years.

While England was celebrating the triumph of Reform, one of the greatest of modern authors, stricken to the death, was embarking on a little steamer on the Rhine and coming home to die. He reached London on the evening of June 13, and remained at an hotel in Jermyn Street, too exhausted to be carried further till the beginning of July. The newspapers, fresh from the conflict on Reform, teemed with paragraphs about the health of Sir Walter Scott, and one 'well-meaning' though 'ill-informed' writer suggested

[1] It ought perhaps to be added that Lord John took a very active part in the legislation which may be described as supplemental to the Reform Act, and specially in the Division of Counties and Boundaries of Boroughs Bill—a measure of which he had charge.

that travel had exhausted his resources, and that his physical weakness was aggravated by a sense of pecuniary embarrassment. The paragraph 'caught the attention of some members of the Government;' and in consequence Mr. Lockhart, the poet's son-in-law, 'received a private communication that, if the case were as stated, Sir Walter's family had only to say what sum would relieve him from embarrassment, and it would be immediately advanced by the Treasury. The then Paymaster of the Forces, Lord John Russell, had the delicacy to convey this message through a lady with whose friendship he knew us to be honoured.'[1] The offer was gratefully refused, but posterity will do well to recollect that the statesman in the hour of his greatest victory was not unmindful of suffering worth, and to acknowledge that such acts as these, and not mere political triumphs, form

> That best portion of a good man's life,
> His little, nameless, unremember'd acts
> Of kindness and of love.

[1] Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, ch. lxxxiii.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FALL OF LORD GREY.

THE second Parliament of William IV. was dissolved in December 1832. The great measure which had been passed during its short existence had made Lord John Russell the most popular man in the country. Whatever credit attached to Lord Grey in the one House, or to Lord Althorp in the other, the people, as a whole, deemed the Reform Act as his work. Its success, they thought, was largely due to the persistent manner in which he had advocated Reform from 1819 to 1830. The heat of the struggle had been borne by him; and, if the crown of victory had been awarded by popular vote, it would have been placed on his brow.

Under such circumstances, Lord John's re-election was certain. He paid his constituents the compliment of going down to Devonshire in September. But Mr. Moore, who met him at Bowood in October, and who returned with him to London, recorded that 'he was in excellent spirits after his canvass;' and again that he 'was very agreeable, laughed like a schoolboy half the time.' During their journey to London the two friends 'never ceased talking on one subject or another the whole way.' Mr. Moore, who had always regarded the Reform Bill with alarm, declared that he retained his opinion 'as to the rashness of giving so much to the people.' But Lord John replied that—

> So far from its being rash, he thought it the most prudent thing they could have done. It was a very different measure they had to take of the quantum of Reform necessary when in and out. While in opposition, they were obliged to take what they could get; but, when in power, and called upon to originate a measure themselves, they were pledged, he thought, to give the amplest they could with safety.

Mr. Moore was not convinced; but he

was much struck, during this whole day's conversation, not only with the manly frankness of Lord John himself, but still more at [*sic*] the temper and candour with which he bore the free speaking of his companion.

The friends lunched

at Reading, and arrived at the Pay Office before seven. Found a snug dinner ready and also a snug bedroom, into which, instead of going to Fielding's, I turned for the night, Lord John expressing his regret that he could not ask me to use it all the time I remained in town, as he expected Lady William up daily from Woburn.

Lord John told me as we came up that he had been employed during his other great occupations not only in writing a book but in printing it.

Lord John did not remain for many weeks in London. At the beginning of December he returned to Devonshire for his election; and thence wrote the following letter to Mr. Moore:—

Endsleigh: Dec. 9.

My dear Moore,—I am glad to find, what I should have been sorry to find on any other occasion, that you are not coming into Parliament. I should have been sorry to see you going out into the Lobby when I was staying in; and, as I am convinced that must have been the case, I would rather have a worse man in your place than have that violence done to my feelings.[1]

I can well enter into your Irish rebel sentiments. I wish I knew what to do to help your country. But, as I do not, it is of no use giving her smooth words, as O'Connell told me, and I must be silent. Indeed, when I want to say anything in favour of Liberal measures to the Irish, O'Connell's conduct (to which he has put the finishing stroke by turning out Duncannon) takes the argument out of my mouth.

I am going to publish what you saw without my name for the public rumination. Pray do not betray me.[2]

. . . . . .

[1] Mr. Moore had been invited to stand for Limerick. His reply to the requisition will be found in *Memoirs*, vi. 305. The whole of this paragraph is quoted by him in his Diary (*ibid.* 307).

[2] Lord John published the *Essay on the Causes of the French Revolution* in 1833. The publication was anonymous, but the veil was very thin: on p. 29

We shall have a keen contest here between Bulteel and Buller.[1]—Yours truly,

J. RUSSELL.

It is evident from this letter, that Lord John, in 1832, embraced the views on Irish policy which have been ordinarily held by English statesmen. It has been their constant misfortune that they have been unable to appreciate the causes which have made the Irish perpetually dissatisfied and disloyal. During the Administration of Lord Grey, Whig statesmen were specially unable to probe the true causes of Irish discontent. For thirty years they had been educated in the belief that religious disabilities formed the chief Irish grievance. The disqualification had been removed; and the Irish were justifying by their conduct the Tory prediction that the redress of one grievance would only lead to an agitation for the removal of another. In the twenties, Ireland had been organised to secure the Emancipation of the Roman Catholics; in the thirties, the Irish Government was confronted with a tithe war.

Unhappily, moreover, the Whig Ministers were themselves partly to blame for the difficulties which they encountered. In forming his Administration, Lord Grey chose as Irish Viceroy the distinguished General, Lord Anglesey, who had already filled that position under the Duke of Wellington. He gave him as his Chief Secretary Mr. Stanley, a man whose abilities qualified him to shine in almost any capacity, but whose temperament made it certain that he would fail to conciliate the Irish. And the initial blunder was followed by sins of omission and commission. The Whig Ministers not only refused to offer office to Mr. O'Connell, but they deliberately conferred the Chief Justiceship of the Common Pleas on Mr. Doherty, who had been the Duke of Wellington's

Lord John wrote, 'We have seen at the beginning of this work the manners and morals of the Court in the days of Lewis the Fourteenth;' and the beginning of this work is, of course, the opening chapter of the *Memoirs of the Affairs of Europe.*

[1] Mr. John Croker Bulteel, who was the son-in-law of Lord Grey, stood with Lord John for the southern of the two divisions into which Devonshire had been divided by the Reform Act. He was successful.

legal adviser; they offered the post of Attorney-General to Mr. Pennefather, a Tory: and on his refusal of it they appointed a Conservative to that office and a Protestant to the Solicitor-Generalship. The Irish, therefore, in the earliest days of the new Ministry, received the plainest evidence that no change was to be introduced into the principles of Irish government, and that Irish patriots had nothing to expect from a Whig Administration.

Every one acquainted with Irish history could have predicted the results of such a policy. Lord Anglesey was soon actively engaged in prohibiting meetings and proclaiming associations; and Mr. O'Connell was employed in devising methods of evading the Viceroy's proclamations. The Viceroy, after some difficulty, succeeded in procuring the conviction of the agitator, and the English Government, requiring his vote on the Reform Bill, allowed judgment to be postponed.

Unhappily, too, a new and unprecedented difficulty was forcing itself on the Irish Government. The indiscreet conduct of one or two Protestant clergymen led to an organised resistance to the payment of tithes. Whatever opinion it might entertain of the justice of a system which compelled the Irish Roman Catholics to pay tithe and cess in support of a Protestant Church, the Irish Government could not avoid attempting to enforce the law. But, as 1831 wore on, it became evident that, though it had constabulary and troops at its back, it could not collect the tithes. In consequence, the Ministry, at the commencement of 1832, acting nominally on the advice of select committees, but in reality carrying out a scheme of Mr. Stanley's, passed two Acts: (1) enabling the Irish Government to relieve the distressed incumbent, and to repay itself by collecting the tithes which the incumbent had failed to obtain; (2) providing for the compulsory composition of tithes; and throwing the payment, as tenancies fell in, on the sub-lessee, lessee, and landlord.

These measures, good in themselves, failed, because they did not go far enough. Though, under one of them, the tenant at will was relieved from the payment of tithes, the small farmers, who held leases either for terms of years or on lives, obtained no relief. The Irish Roman Catholics naturally

disliked the provisions of the other measure, which authorised the Government itself to collect the tithes. The Viceroy, in Mr. O'Connell's language, had been turned into Tithe Proctor-General for Ireland. Thus the legislation of 1832 proved useless. The Irish Government failed to collect the tithes; and the Irish people, organised in bands of Blackfeet and Whitefeet, arrayed themselves against the authorities. Force was met by force, outrage by repression; and the condition of Ireland became worse and more lawless than it had been at any previous period since the Union.

If the Whig Administration had secured the services of Mr. O'Connell in some suitable office, the influence of the first Irishman alive might have been exerted in this dilemma on the side of authority; it was now thrown into the scale of disorder. Mr. O'Connell declared that he had no patience with the 'base, brutal, and bloody' Whigs; and that the true remedy for Irish grievances was to be found in the institution of an Irish Legislature. Forgetting all that the Whigs had done for Ireland in the past; forgetting their constant advocacy of the claims of the Roman Catholics; forgetting even that his seat in Parliament was due to their efforts—Mr. O'Connell was denouncing Whig measures, and waving the banner of Home Rule.

It is evident from the letter which has already been quoted that Lord John shared the feelings with which his friends regarded the conduct of Mr. O'Connell. And he seems almost to have despaired of any solution of the Irish difficulty. For, writing to the same correspondent only a month later, he said—

> We are very busy with Church, slavery, and other matters. In England I hope it may be true that there is no wrong without a remedy; in Ireland, all is wrong, and nothing a remedy.

One remedy, however, was always available. Imitating the conduct of all its predecessors and of almost all its successors, the Ministers considered that, if they were unable to redress grievances, they might, at least, preserve order; and consequently determined on asking Parliament for 'such additional powers as may be found necessary for controlling

and punishing the disturbers of the public peace.' There is every reason for believing that Lord John was personally in favour of the policy which was thus pursued. When Mr. O'Connell denounced it as 'brutal' and 'bloody,' Lord John himself called the Irish agitator to order; and in the subsequent debate he avowed his undoubted conviction—

that the dreadful scenes which were occurring in Ireland day after day, that the general insecurity of property, and the peril of life experienced from hour to hour in that country required such an alteration in the state of the law as might support the supreme authority of the State.

And years afterwards he wrote in his old age—

A measure of coercion containing very strong provisions was sent over by the Government of Ireland. Lord Grey accepted it, because, in his opinion, the protection of life and property was a duty incumbent upon every Government. Lord Althorp accepted it also, because, in his opinion, the stronger the measure the more likely was it to be temporary, and to give way after a short time to the restoration of the ordinary law.

Lord John's friend and correspondent, Mr. Moore, had differed from Lord John on the subject of Reform; he differed from him still more widely on the subject of coercion; and he despatched to the 'Times' the well-known lines, 'Paddy's Metamorphosis.' In the poem, Paddy, following other Paddies to the new world, hears himself on his arrival addressed by a negro in his own language, and

in horror yells out
Good Lord! only think,—black and curly already!

And the poet adds the moral—

'Tis thus,—but, alas! by a marvel more true
Than is told in this rival of Ovid's best stories,—
Your Whigs, when in office a short year or two,
By a *lusus naturæ* all turned into Tories.
And thus, when I hear them strong measures advise,
Ere the seats that they sit on have time to get steady,
I say—while I listen with tears in my eyes—
Good Lord! only think,—black and curly already.

The verses appeared anonymously in the 'Times' of

March 1. That evening Lord John made a 'black and curly' speech in defence of his colleagues' policy; and the following morning he despatched the following letter to Mr. Moore at Sloperton:—

Dear Moore,—Here is, for your 'black and woolly already,'[1] if it be yours, more sense, though less poetry.—Yours truly,

J. R.

March 2.

THE IRISH ——.

In Genoa 'tis said that a jewel of yore
Clear, large, and resplendent, ennobled a shrine,
Where the faithful in multitudes flocked to adore,
And the emerald was pure, and the saint was divine.
But the priest who attended the altar was base,
And the faithful who worshipp'd besotted and blind;
He put a green glass in the emerald's place,
And the multitude still in mute rev'rence inclined.
So Ireland had once a fair gem of pure water
When Grattan and Charlemont wept at her sorrow,
But a token of glass her new patriots have brought her—
'Tis a jewel to-day, 'twill be shiver'd to-morrow.

Coercion, however, was not the only remedy which Mr. Stanley and his colleagues were applying to Ireland. They had the wisdom to acknowledge that the condition of the Irish Church formed the main grievance, or one of the main grievances of the Irish people; and they had the courage to introduce a really comprehensive measure of Church Reform. Ireland, in 1832, was divided into twenty-two bishoprics and subdivided into 1,400 benefices. The bishops' estates were said to be worth 600,000*l.* a year; though, from being let on leases renewable on fines, the nominal incomes of the sees did not reach more than one-fifth or one-sixth of that sum. The income of the beneficed clergy also amounted to about 600,000*l.* a year; while the cess, or rate, which could be still imposed for Church purposes in Ireland, yielded a further sum of 60,000*l.* or 70,000*l.*

The Bill which the Ministry proposed, and which Lord

[1] Lord John apparently writing from memory, thought that Mr. Moore had written 'black and woolly,' and not 'black and curly.'

Althorp introduced, imposed a tax of from five to fifteen per cent. on all ecclesiastical incomes exceeding 200*l.* a year; and the proceeds of this tax were applied to the purposes to which the Church cess, which was abolished, had been devoted. Ten of the twenty-two bishoprics were extinguished; a further saving of 60,000*l.* was thus effected; and the Legislature was empowered to deal with this sum as it thought proper. Even in 1832, however, three members of the Cabinet, Lord John, Lord Althorp, and Lord Durham, desired to go much further, and to apply some portion of the savings to the general purposes of education. How strongly Lord John felt on this subject, and how nearly the Grey Administration was broken up upon it, will be seen from the following correspondence:—

(No. 1) Whitehall: Oct. 20, 1832.

My dear Lord Grey,—Although I did not wish to enter my formal protest last night against the plan adopted by the Government, I yet saw very clearly the result to which I am forced to come.

I set out on the principle that a clergy ought to teach religion. It follows that when there neither are nor will be any, or more than an infinitely small fraction of, Protestants of the Established Church, it is not necessary or useful to have a clergyman of that Church.

This seems no very extravagant proposition, but I should be content not to insist upon it were it not that the disorders of Ireland, at the present moment, hinge upon this very question; and you have to govern by military law in order to maintain the reverse of my proposition, viz. that the incomes of the Church should be devoted exclusively to the use of one-tenth of the population.

I might, it is true, suspend my opinion, as it were, and vote for the plan proposed with the intention of carrying it further at a future time. But the avowal of such an intention, which I should not be able to disguise, even if I wished it, would weaken your Government and make the Church very jealous of adopting it [*i.e.* the proposed plan].

I admit the difficulty of carrying a measure which should go to the cure of the disease. But I am not bound, on that account, to carry out a system which I think unjust, tending to an effusion of human blood, and the insecurity of life and property in Ireland.

Upon these grounds I feel myself compelled to say that I cannot anticipate that I shall be able to support the plan of the Cabinet in that full and entire manner in which it ought to be supported by a member of the Government. The time of my resignation must

depend on your judgment and convenience. I feel too much impressed with your kindness to me on every occasion to act in any manner that may embarrass or annoy you.—I remain, my dear Lord Grey, ever yours faithfully,

J. RUSSELL

(No. 2) Whitehall: Oct. 25, 1832.

My dear Lord Grey,—On the morning after the Cabinet held at your house on Friday last, I wrote the accompanying letter marked No. 1. But, calling upon Althorp to show him the letter, he informed me, before he read it, of his opinions, which exactly coincided with mine. This made me pause, because, though my resignation might be of little importance, his would lead to a dissolution of the Government, which in the present state of our affairs, foreign and domestic, could not be otherwise than a great calamity. Yesterday evening I received a note from him saying, 'I will not say I am convinced, but upon the best consideration I could give to the subject I did not think I should be justified in breaking up the Government,'[1] and saying that 'for the same reason' he hoped I should follow his example.[2] Undoubtedly I should not feel justified in breaking up the Government. Such an event might probably lead to war in Europe, and certainly would deprive the country of the best hope of a peaceable reform of those institutions which require reform, and a steady maintenance of the principles of the constitution against further demands.

But I feel it due to you to put you in possession of the sentiments I entertained upon hearing the plan for a reform of the Church of Ireland, because, although I could bring myself to vote for that plan without admitting any amendment, yet such a vote would be notoriously against my opinion, and no little harm might accrue to your Government upon that account. I should not say, I need not say, that I looked to a further reform, but on the other hand I could not profess to have altered my opinion any further than this: that a more extensive measure would be impracticable.

Upon the whole, I leave the matter to your judgment to determine whether your Government, which I am most anxious to see continue, will be best supported by my remaining to vote for the plan with such feelings as I entertain, or by my retirement from the Administration. Let me only add that, whatever your decision may

[1] Lord Althorp went on: 'So, as I found Lord Grey quite stout, I have given way.'

[2] Lord Althorp concluded: 'For your resignation on such a point, or, indeed, on any other, will be fatal to us, perhaps not instantaneously, but in a very short time.'

be, I shall be quite satisfied that you will not advise any course by which my personal character will be tarnished.—I remain, ever yours faithfully,

J. RUSSELL.

Private] Downing Street: Oct. 25, 1832.

My dear Lord John,—I have just received your letter enclosing a copy of one which you had written and intended to send after the former discussion of the Irish question at East Sheen.

It is very painful to me to find that your objections to Stanley's plan still continue so strong. I cannot help considering it as containing a large and effective measure of Reform; quite as large as we could hope to carry, and likely to produce very beneficial effects if properly supported. The greatest danger to it would arise from a division amongst ourselves; and, if that division should lead to a breaking up of the Administration, I need not state to you the certain consequences, of which you seem to be sufficiently aware, of danger to the peace of Europe, great loss of character to ourselves, and the absolute extinction of all hope of a moderate and effectual reformation of those parts of the Church establishment which are most felt as real grievances, or most exposed to invidious objections.

Without arguing on the soundness of your principle that the emoluments of the Church, being provided for religious instruction, should be proportioned to the situation and numbers of the population by whom that instruction is required, I can only repeat again, what I have so frequently stated in the course of these discussions, that I cannot entertain a moment's doubt that, if the Cabinet could be brought to your opinion, and should frame a measure on a broad and distinct avowal of that principle, their complete overthrow would be the almost instantaneous result. A dissolution of the Government, brought about in this manner, would be no less certainly productive of all the consequences which I have already stated, and which you admit, than if it were produced by a disagreement and division amongst ourselves.

With respect to the question which you put to me, what I have already said seems to furnish an answer. I certainly could not, even for the advantage of supporting the Government, on the existence of which at this moment so much depends, advise you to do anything which I thought would prove injurious to the high character which you possess in the country; and I think I may refer to the conduct of Althorp as affording the most satisfactory assurance on this head. But, though I can have no doubt on it, I should much prefer your

taking Holland's opinion—which will be dictated by equal feelings of personal affection and of regard for your public reputation—to your relying on mine.

I will only add that I anxiously hope that we may go on together, without a greater sacrifice of private opinion on either side than may be reconciled to feelings of honour and to a just sense of public duty, as I can scarcely contemplate an event which would be more painful to me than one which would have the effect of separating me from you, believing that whatever difference there may be between us is not a difference of principle, and arises only on a question as to what is most expedient and practicable under all the circumstances of the time.—Believe me ever, dear Lord John, yours most sincerely,

GREY.

In accordance with Lord Grey's advice, Lord John referred the personal matter to Lord Holland, who replied as follows:—

Oct. 26, 1832.

Dear John,—To the question which you put to Lord Grey, and have agreed at his instance to refer to me, in the terms in which it stands in your letter of yesterday, namely, 'to determine whether Grey's Government would be best supported by your remaining to vote for the plan of Church Reform with such feelings as you therein describe, or by your retirement from office,' the answer appears to me so plain and obvious, and indeed such a truism, that I can hardly with gravity deliver a judgment upon it, as carrying any authority from me. Your separation from your colleagues, if it were merely the result of health or any accident, unconnected with difference on political matters, would irresistibly and necessarily weaken any Ministry that had hitherto had the advantage of your assistance in its counsels, of your support in Parliament, and of the authority which your character, so justly high in the country, and of the popularity which your successful exertions, old and of later date, carry with them, to sustain it. But the terms and the occasion would make it yet more injurious, and in my conscience I believe fatal, to our Administration. The resignation of the mover of the Reform Bill just at the moment when the manner in which that great experiment would work was about to be tried, would appal and disappoint all the sincere friends of the measure, and quite dishearten those, no small portion, who relied on its wisdom and good consequences because proposed by you, and likely to be carried into effect under your auspices and superintendence; and, if anything could aggravate those evil consequences, it would be the knowledge that your

separation arose in consequence of a difference on another great question of Reform affecting the Church. . . .

I think, however, I perceive, though much to my surprise, that there is another doubt remaining on your mind, namely, whether, consistently with your principles and honour, you can remain in a Ministry who propose a measure, short of that to which your opinions and wishes would lead you, merely because it was impracticable. Now I need not tell you, my dear John, that, if your retaining office with your view of this question was in my mind inconsistent with your honour or injurious to your character, I should strenuously recommend your resignation. . . . The question you have to decide on conscience is not whether your plan or Stanley's is the right one, but whether Stanley's plan or your resignation, with its consequences, is preferable. By acquiescing and supporting Stanley's plan you neither surrender nor counteract the principle you lay down in No. 1. You bring the Irish Church practically somewhat nearer, though still I admit at some distance from, the principle you would establish. . . . Unless, therefore, you think it is practicable with the present Court, Cabinet, Parliament, or people to carry a measure more consonant to your wishes and principles, or unless you think that by resigning, at the risk of breaking up the Ministry, you render the accomplishment of a great public benefit more certain or more easy, . . . I confess it appears to me that you are not *compelled* by your principles, conscience, or public honour to resign, but that, viewing the consequences of such a step, you can hardly reconcile it to these considerations. I am strongly fortified in my judgment by the opinion and conduct of Althorp, who agrees entirely with you in your principle, who certainly dislikes office more than you do, and who, I need not add, is a man who acts on all matters with a scrupulous, deliberate, and inflexible regard to his public duty and private conscience; but who, entertaining your principles and opinions, remains and will support Stanley's plan from a conscientious conviction that it is *his duty* to do so. To recapitulate this prolix judgment. . . . I am of opinion that your resignation on this point would be highly injurious to the Ministry and the country; and that, as far as I understand your general principle and the outlines of Stanley's plan, the latter, though it falls short of your views, is not inconsistent with them; and that you are consequently neither surrendering nor betraying them by acquiescing in and supporting a plan which falls short of this.—Your very tiresome, but conscientious judge and friend,

VASSALL HOLLAND.

After this correspondence Lord John had no alternative

but to remain in office. The course of events, however, made him regret this decision. The single provision in Mr. Stanley's proposal which carried out his own views, by enabling the Legislature to deal as it thought fit with the income of the suppressed bishoprics, was omitted from the Bill on Mr. Stanley's own motion. Its omission was justified at the time by the argument that it would reconcile the House of Lords to a measure which many of the Peers disliked. But it did not even effect this object. The Lords only adopted the Bill after they had introduced an amendment into it exempting existing incumbents from the proposed tax on incomes. The omission, too, of these clauses had the further disadvantage of affording the Irish a fresh grievance. Mr. O'Connell declared that the chief virtue of the measure was gone ; and Lord John, who agreed with him, had some difficulty in consoling himself with the reflection that the remedy of glaring abuses and the abolition of church-rates constituted in themselves a large and welcome measure of Reform.

Happily the session in which the Bill was passed was memorable for other achievements. In 1833 slavery was abolished, the first effective Factory Act was passed, the charter of the Bank of England was revised, and the monopoly of the East India Company was terminated. These measures, however, did not satisfy the expectations of ardent politicians. Large as had been the Reform which had been passed in 1832, it had not conceded any of the five points on which the Radicals had insisted. It had not given every householder a vote ; it had not afforded the electors the protection of the ballot ; it had not made Parliaments annually terminable ; it had not abolished the property qualification which members were still required to possess ; it had not even provided the wages which the working classes were anxious that their representatives should receive. Mr. Tennyson, who five years before had co-operated with Lord John in endeavouring to procure a small measure of organic Reform, asked leave to introduce a Bill to shorten the duration of Parliaments ; and Lord John, in opposing it, declared that triennial Parliaments were incompatible with our mixed constitution.[1] This declara-

[1] *Hansard*, xix. 1128.

tion was quite consistent with the views which Lord John had laid down years before in his 'Essay on the Constitution,' and with his defence of the Septennial Act in his 'Memoirs of the Affairs of Europe.' But it undoubtedly disappointed a good many people. Even his own father wrote to him—

My dear John,—As I have always accustomed myself to speak my mind to you without reserve on all political subjects, I must not conceal from you the pain I felt in reading your speech on Mr. Tennyson's motion for shortening the duration of Parliaments. I regret it on many accounts; and one of them is, I own, the incalculable injury it will do you in Devonshire if you ever mean to represent that county again. You are probably aware that a register is kept there to record all your votes and speeches; and I need not remind you that you were returned, not by the gentry, not by any overwhelming influence of property, but by the yeomen and Reformers of the county. People will suspect, or at all events they will say, that you regret having carried into effect the great measure of Parliamentary Reform, if they judge from your speech on Mr. Tennyson's motion, and from another recent speech where you talk of 'a revolution once a year.' . . . You may rest assured that public opinion is decidedly in favour of shortening the duration of Parliament, and you must make up your mind to see the question carried in another year.

The speech on which this correspondence took place was the last of any importance made by Lord John during the session of 1833; for though the session continued for more than a month after the debate on Mr. Tennyson's motion, and though Lord John was constantly present in the House, he had no occasion during the remaining period to make any serious oratorical effort. Perhaps the state of his health made it impossible for him to do so. It had suffered from the constant work of a session, which had been protracted far beyond any previous experience; and his friends were anxious that he should be released from his attendance in St. Stephen's.[1]

The change which Lord John required he at once obtained; and he managed in gaining it to derive fresh

[1] Lord William wrote to him on August 23, 'I am sorry to hear that your health has suffered in carrying through your arduous task. But I hope it is no more than what fresh air and rest will restore.'

experience which was eminently useful to him. He determined on going to Ireland, which he had not visited since his father's viceroyalty. On the day after the prorogation he wrote from Nuneham to Mr. Moore—

Nuneham: Aug. 30.

Dear Moore,—I am actually going to Ireland, which I was never sure of before. Now, if you could manage to join me in seeing Killarney, I think we might spend a fortnight together very pleasantly. My plan is to go to Bessborough, to stay with Duncannon till about September 15; and then go to Cork and Killarney and back to Dublin. You might come from Bristol to Cork, and join me at Waterford by the 15th without much trouble; and you will find a place in my postchaise, as you formerly did in my calèche. And you may be as patriotic as you please about the 'first flower of the earth and first gem of the sea.' Indeed your being a rebel may somewhat atone for my being a Cabinet Minister.

Write to the Pay Office and let me know your resolve.—Ever yours truly,

J. RUSSELL.

Mr. Moore at first was half disposed to accept the tempting offer. But, for once, he courageously determined to forego his inclination and stick to the task on which he was then engaged of writing a history of Ireland for 'Lardner's Cyclopædia.' Lord John accordingly went alone, reaching Holyhead on September 4, and travelling viâ Dublin to Lord Duncannon's place at Bessborough. After spending a few days with Lord Ebrington near Waterford, he proceeded on the 20th to Lismore, and on the 21st to Cork. Thence, on September 22, he again wrote to Mr. Moore, to whom he had sent special invitations to join him both from Holyhead and Bessborough.

Cork: Sept. 22.

Dear Captain Rock,[1]—You did quite wrong not to come. But I own I have myself to blame for not writing and communicating more regularly. However, my inexactness has been owing to that of Ebrington, who depended on Lord Fortescue's health. He and I have now settled to go to Dublin—he in the mail and I in my carriage—and thence together to the north. This would have suited

[1] Mr. Moore in 1824 had published his *Memoirs of Captain Rock, the celebrated Irish Chieftain.*

you, and we might have returned to you at Dublin, and I would have embarked there. But it is all in vain now.

I like your countrymen very much better in their own land than elsewhere. They are so kind and obliging. Unluckily they are savage at times.—Yours truly,

J. R.

Remember me to Mrs. Moore. Hang Dr. Lardner on his tree of knowledge.

The programme indicated in the letter was carried out. Lord John went to Dublin, and from Dublin with Lord Ebrington to the north of Ireland. At Belfast the author of the Reform Act was entertained at a public dinner, and was somewhat alarmed to find that a great part of the company were Repealers. However, as he told Mr. Moore when they next met—

His informant assured him that he need be under no apprehension, as the most violent of them would feel themselves bound to behave well on such an occasion, and he could answer for there being nothing offensive to him in their proceedings. The result proved that the informant knew his men well.

Mr. Moore, perhaps, doubted whether he would have succeeded in placing the same restraint on himself. For he added in his diary:—

I said that, though often regretting I had not been with him in the north, it was after all as well perhaps that I was not, as ten to one I should have got into some scrape at this dinner, either by saying too much or too little.

So ended Lord John's Irish tour. Apart from the pleasure which he derived from it, it necessarily furnished him with a closer knowledge of Ireland and its people than he had previously enjoyed. English statesmen, as a rule, have no practical acquaintance with Ireland, and no sympathy with Irish ideas; and it was a matter of the first importance both to England and Ireland that the statesman who was already one of the most prominent members of the Whig party, and who was destined two years afterwards to rise to the first place in the House of Commons, should have the opportunity of ascertaining by personal inquiry the feelings and

wishes of the Irish people. And the moment was singularly opportune, for Irish affairs had already forced themselves to the front, and they were to occupy for some years the greater part of the time of Parliament.[1]

The Whig Cabinet in the autumn of 1833 was necessarily compelled to consider the demand for fresh legislation for Ireland. Experience showed that it was just as impossible to collect the composition under the Act of 1832 as it had previously proved impracticable to collect the tithe. The opportunity for new laws, moreover, seemed favourable. In the course of 1833 the two chief officers of the Irish Administration, Lord Anglesey and Mr. Stanley, were replaced by Lord Wellesley and, at Lord John Russell's own suggestion, Mr. Littleton.[2] At the beginning of 1834, therefore, the leading members of the Irish Government were practically unpledged to any particular policy, and were free to devise fresh remedies for the tithe question. Unfortunately one impediment interfered with its satisfactory solution. Irish

[1] Lord John committed his own conclusions on his Irish tour to writing:—

Phœnix Park: Oct. 18, 1833.

1. A Government party ought to be formed, and cemented by every possible means. For this purpose the Orange magistracy in the North, and the Repeal agitators in the South, ought both to be repressed.

2. The utmost firmness must be shown in maintaining the law everywhere. Nobody in Ireland expects this to be done, and nothing but the fact convinces them.

3. In the course of improvement, and by reason of improvement, numbers of bad tenants are cut adrift, and, from idle loiterers, become Whiteboys and murderers. Independently of poor laws some remedy might be devised for this evil.

4. On those estates which are not improving exorbitant rents are exacted by the distress of the landlord, and from the distress of the tenant. Any scheme which should enable the Crown to purchase land on a large scale would give relief to such distressed landlords, and be the means of providing for great numbers of industrious tenants.

5. There are three principal religions in Ireland—the Establishment, few in number, but strong in landed property; the Roman Catholics, numerous, and containing nearly all the very poor class; the Presbyterians, considerable in numbers, and remarkable for intelligence and commercial prosperity. All these ought to be provided for by the State.

6. Future inquiry may lead to some diminution of the revenues of the Established Church after all its proper uses have been provided for. But this subject requires long and patient investigation before any decision is made.

[2] Greville *Memoirs*, ii. 372, note.

Viceroy and Irish Secretary could not bring forward a Tithe Bill which did not command the concurrence of the Cabinet, and no measure could fulfil this condition which did not meet with Mr. Stanley's support. All that the new Irish Government could do, therefore, was to work on the lines which Mr. Stanley had already laid down in 1832. In that year, in converting the tithe into a pecuniary equivalent, Mr. Stanley had freed the tenant at will from the burden and thrown it on the last lessor. In 1834 Mr. Littleton was allowed to propose that the composition should be converted into a land tax, payable to the State by the parties liable to the composition, and redeemable after five years by the landlord, who was to be allowed an abatement of one-fifth of the redemption due from him. If the tax were not redeemed in five years, it was to become a rent-charge, redeemable, by any person having a substantial interest in the estate, on easy terms. The proposal evaded the questions which were dividing the Cabinet. It did not raise the issue whether the revenues of the Church were unnecessarily large for its maintenance, and it did not determine whether any surplus revenues which it enjoyed might be applied to other uses.

If the Bill had been skilfully drawn to secure the support of both sections of a divided Cabinet, it was open to the objection that unanimity had been obtained at a ruinous price, since a Tithe Bill was plainly useless if it failed to satisfy the Irish. Mr. Littleton's measure was at once denounced by Mr. O'Connell as most excellent humbug. In the debate which immediately ensued Lord John was personally taunted with the opinions which he had previously expressed on the revenues of the Irish Church,[1] and was asked to reconcile

[1] Lord John said that 'the only opinion he had ever given on the subject when out of office was by giving a silent vote in favour of a motion made by the hon. member for Middlesex [i.e. by Mr. Hume] in 1824.' (*Recollections and Suggestions*, p. 118). In July 1832, however, speaking as a Cabinet Minister, he had declared that 'he thought that the Protestant Church of Ireland was too large, not only for the purpose of giving instruction to that part of the population of Ireland which professed the Protestant faith, but he thought it too large for its own permanent stability.'—*Hansard*, 3rd Ser., xiv. 377; and the correspondence already cited in this chapter shows how strongly he clung to this opinion.

them with a measure which converted tithes into a land tax; and he at once avowed his adherence to his former opinions. 'As the hon. and learned gentleman well knew, he differed from several of his colleagues in the Administration' on the subject of appropriation. But, though on this point 'he might have the misfortune to express opinions at variance with some of his colleagues,' he was at one with them in denouncing as 'a direct act of robbery' a proposal of Mr. O'Connell's for abolishing two-thirds of the tithe, and for adding the remaining third to the Grand Jury cess.[1]

On May 6, in the course of the debate on the second reading of the Bill, Lord John again repeated his opinion

> that the revenues of the Church of Ireland were larger than necessary for the religious and moral instruction of the persons belonging to that Church, and for the stability of the Church itself. . . . He did not think it would be advisable or wise to mix the question of appropriation with the question of the amount of the revenues; but, when Parliament had vindicated the property to tithes, he should then be prepared to assert his opinion with regard to their appropriation; and if the assertion of that opinion should lead him to differ and separate from those with whom he was united by political connection, and for whom he entertained the deepest private affection, he should feel much regret; yet . . . . he should, at whatever cost and sacrifice, do what he considered his bounden duty; namely, do justice to Ireland.[2]

Lord John shall himself continue the narrative :—

> This speech was prompted by what I understood to be a declaration of Mr. Stanley that he meant to persevere in the opinions he had given respecting the permanence of the Church of Ireland; and I thought that, if that declaration were received in silence by his colleagues, the whole Government would be considered pledged to the maintenance of the revenues of the Church of Ireland undiminished. . . . My speech made a great impression, the cheering was loud and general, and Stanley pronounced his sense of it in a well-known note to Sir James Graham, 'Johnny has upset the coach.'[3]

Mr. Stanley's conclusion was natural enough. Lord John's speech had brought to the front the question which Ministers

[1] *Hansard*, xxi. 620. [2] *Ibid.* xxiii. 666.
[3] *Recollections and Suggestions*, p. 120.

for the sake of peace had been endeavouring to keep in the background. Mr. Ward, the member for St. Albans, at once gave notice of a motion pledging the House to the reduction of the temporal possessions of the Church of Ireland, and Mr. Stanley offered to relieve his colleagues from the embarrassment of his presence by resigning office. The Lord Chancellor in vain endeavoured to patch up the quarrel by suggesting that the Ministry should appoint a royal commission to decide whether the revenues of the Church were in excess of its requirements; but Mr. Stanley saw that the appointment of this commission would commit him to the principle of appropriation, and, in company with three other members of the Cabinet—the Duke of Richmond, Lord Ripon, and Sir James Graham—retired from office.[1]

The expedient which the Chancellor had suggested, though it did not heal the schism in the Cabinet, enabled the Ministers to get rid of Mr. Ward's motion; but in the explanations which followed Lord John again took occasion to commit himself and his colleagues to the policy on which he was resolved.

The appointment of this commission involved a great principle—it involved the principle that, if it was ascertained by facts and by evidence that the revenues appropriated to the Irish Church ought to be applied to different purposes than those to which they were made tributary, or that they ought to be reduced, his Majesty's Ministers would not shrink from the performance of their duty, but prepare a measure for the consideration of the House, founded on, and in accordance with, that report.

Gentlemen [he added] asked what was the Government? He said the Government was the Government of Earl Grey, and of his noble friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It was their Government, framed on the principle that reform was necessary in the Church of Ireland.

[1] Lord William was staying with his brother, Lord John, at this time. Writing to Lord Tavistock on March 12, 1834, he said, 'I remember breakfasting with John the morning after he made his famous declaration (upset the coach). He said to me, "My friends are all very angry with me for my speech last night." I asked him what he had said. "Take the paper and read." I did so, and replied, "I think you were quite right. I approve of every word." Had he quitted the Cabinet then (and Palmerston was for turning him out), how high he would have stood.'

There could be no misapprehension about the meaning of these sentences. Irish Church Reform a few days before had been a question on which Lord John had himself avowed that differences existed in the Cabinet. Irish Church Reform was now stated by Lord John to be the principle on which the existence of the Government depended.

The political differences of colleagues usually lead to estrangements in private life, and few Ministers who have parted from one another in office have remained good and close friends afterwards. It is creditable both to Mr. Stanley and Lord John that their personal friendship for one another was not diminished by their disagreement. On the very day on which the schism was announced, the King held a levee, and Lord Melbourne, Lord John, and Mr. Stanley were laughing with such unfeigned good humour at some ridiculous story that Lord Melbourne was telling, that the bystanders inferred that the separation had been averted. Eight months afterwards Mr. Moore met the Duke of Richmond and Lord John at Holland House and declared that—

> It was amusing to see the Duke with Lord John, whom he had not met for some time, and whom he patted on the back and played with like a schoolboy, quizzing him good-humouredly upon some of the points on which they now differ in politics.[1]

With Mr. Stanley Lord John remained 'Johnny' to the last.

The defection of four members naturally weakened the Whig Administration. But at the same time it made the Cabinet a little more harmonious. The members of it, indeed, did not take advantage of the occasion to recast their Tithe Bill, but they introduced a few alterations in it to make it a little more palatable. Lord John, however, was far from satisfied with this conduct. He frequently offered to resign, he was with difficulty persuaded to remain in office, and he at last only consented to do so on condition that he was allowed to speak out even more strongly than he had yet done.[2] The opportunity soon arrived. On June 23 Mr.

[1] Moore's *Memoirs*, vii. 56, 73.
[2] Greville *Memoirs*, iii. 98.

Littleton, moving the House into committee on the Tithe Bill, explained the few alterations which it was intended to make in it. And Mr. O'Connell, declaring that Ministers ought to be as ready as those who had seceded from them to assert their principles, asked the House to pledge itself to an amendment that the surplus revenues of the Church should be applied to purposes of public utility. In the course of the debate which ensued, Sir Robert Peel drew attention to the different language used on the subject of appropriation by different members of the Cabinet, and, with an inaccuracy which was not usual in him, declared that Lord John had stated that 'the Church in Ireland' is the greatest grievance of which any country ever had to complain. Lord John had no difficulty in correcting the inaccuracy.

I did not say, as the right hon. gentleman supposes, that the Church of Ireland was the greatest grievance that any country had ever suffered. So far from it, I stated that the revenues of the Church were too great for its stability, thereby implying that I desired and contemplated the future stability of the Church. . . . That was my opinion then, and is now; I have seen no reason to alter it.

He went on to say that the necessity of Coercion Acts, measures 'peculiarly abhorrent to those who pride themselves on the name of Whigs,' imposed on Ministers the special duty of looking 'deeper into the causes of the long-standing and permanent evils of that country;' and after an able argument on the nature of Church property, and on the right of the legislature to deal with it, he concluded—

I am well aware that on this subject, above all others, an attempt will be made to raise the cry of 'The Church is in danger.' Whatever success that cry may have, I am prepared to abide by the opinions which I have expressed. I am not prepared to continue the government of Ireland without fully probing her condition. I am not prepared to propose Bills for coercion and the maintenance of a large force of military and police without endeavouring to improve, as far as lies in my power, the condition of the people. . . . If the cry to which I have alluded should be raised and prove successful, and if that dissolution, which has been invoked with such loud cheers by many gentlemen opposite, should take place, let it

come . . . I will not be a Minister to carry on systems which I think founded on bigotry and prejudice. Be the consequence what it may, . . . I am content to abide by these opinions, to carry them out to their fullest extent, not by any premature declaration of mere opinion . . . but by going on gradually, from time to time improving our institutions, and, without injuring the ancient and venerable fabrics, rendering them fit and proper mansions for a great, free, and intelligent people.

In the whole of his previous career Lord John had never spoken with so much vigour; even in the debates on the Reform Bill his words had never elicited such hearty cheering. Mr. Ward, as the author of Appropriation, rose at once to beg Mr. O'Connell after these 'manly declarations' to withdraw his amendment; and, though Mr. O'Connell declined to do so, he expressed his 'admiration of the sentiments of the noble lord.' Here is what a much older friend thought of Lord John's speech:—

I cannot help hastening to tell you that you have relieved me from a most heavy weight of suspense and anxiety by your noble speech of Monday last. 'Je reconnais mon sang,' if I may apply such a quotation, *roturier* as I am, to the blood of the Russells. But I *do* recognise in that speech all that I have ever admired and loved in you, and, let what will happen with others, you at least come safe and unsinged out of the furnace, and a devil of a furnace it is, to be sure. . . . The character of one such man as you is worth all the convocations of bishops and parsons that ever were yet—convocated. I have no other word for it.

Here is Lord John's answer:—

Whitehall: June 28, 1834.

My dear Moore,—You cannot doubt that I am very much gratified by your letter. My friends in general, I am glad to say, have, both in the House and out of it, cheered me on with more praise than I deserve, and I believe, by dint of encouragement, they will at last make me what by nature I am not, namely, a good speaker.

But there are occasions on which one must express one's feelings or sink into contempt. I own I have not been easy during the period for which I thought it absolutely necessary to suspend the assertion of my opinions in order to secure peace in this country.

If there is no hesitation or shrinking among us at the helm, we

shall still pass through the straits in safety; but if there is, I can see no seamark which can afford hope to the country.

Remember me kindly to Mrs. Moore.—Ever yours truly,

J. RUSSELL.

'The straits,' however, were very narrow, and, if there was no shrinking at the helm, there was grievous lack of discipline in the crew. On the day that followed that on which Lord John was writing, the council took place at which the Cabinet agreed to proceed with the Coercion Bill which the Irish Secretary, Mr. Littleton, had privately assured Mr. O'Connell should not be introduced in its integrity. Mr. O'Connell, declining to allow Mr. Littleton the advantage of secrecy, detailed the whole transaction publicly to the House of Commons, and, in the general confusion which followed, Lord Grey retired from office and was succeeded by Lord Melbourne. Lord John, in the heat of the crisis, acted in a manner which reminds the reader of his boyhood. 'Seeing that nothing more was to be done that night, I left the Cabinet and went to the opera.'

It was Lord John's hope—and the wish was shared by Lord Melbourne and Lord Althorp—that the King, in accepting Lord Grey's resignation, would have sent for Sir Robert Peel, and it was with much reluctance and heavy misgivings that the Ministers resumed the thankless task of carrying on the government. In the short period which remained to them they succeeded in passing a modified Coercion Bill through both Houses of Parliament, and in carrying a modified Tithe Bill through the Commons. But the Tithe Bill was rejected by the Lords, and Ireland was thus deprived of the remedy which thoughtful and tolerant men like Lord John were anxious to secure her.

Thus, during the session of 1834, the Whig Ministry had been weakened by the secession of the Duke of Richmond, Lord Ripon, Sir J. Graham, and Mr. Stanley, and decapitated by the retirement of Lord Grey. It had failed to secure the measure dealing with tithes in Ireland, on which its existence seemed at one time to be staked; and, though posterity owes it a deep debt of gratitude for passing the Poor Law of 1834, that reform rather tended to increase its unpopularity

than to promote its credit. It was plain to everyone that the Ministers could only retrieve their position by an earnest effort, and, though the session was protracted till August 15, Lord Melbourne, at the very commencement of the recess, consulted Lord John on the propriety of reassembling Parliament almost immediately. Here is Lord John's answer:—

Saltram:[1] Sept. 12, 1834.

Dear Melbourne,—I received only last night your letter of the 8th. I quite agree with you that the question of assembling Parliament requires great consideration, and that the pros and cons are both of great weight. But I attach little consequence, I confess, to any arguments drawn from suppositions that Parliament will not go along with us. In the present actual state of affairs I own I think it the duty of Government to adopt a decided course of policy and ask Parliament for their support; and I think from all I know of the House of Commons that they will be far more likely to support a Ministry so acting than one which pursues the wretched, wavering, blundering course of policy which was adopted last session. The House of Commons then naturally say, 'These fellows don't know what they're about; we must take the affair into our own hands and manage it for them.'

I am aware that it will not do to propose coercion laws if there be no practical act on the part of O'Connell to justify it. The misfortune is that, having prepared in Tipperary and the other counties his whole means, he may open his battery in Dublin about November 20, when it is too late to call Parliament before Christmas. What I should be inclined to propose, then, is this: that Parliament should be called together to consider the tithe question, and that we should introduce a Bill on the principle of that of last year, only clearly providing that all money paid by the Treasury should be repaid out of the property of the Church, and that livings, where there was not a tenth of the population Churchmen, should be suspended when vacant for that purpose; that in proposing this measure Government should declare that they were ready to protect the Protestants of Ireland against any club government which should pretend to direct elections and intimidate juries; that, if necessary, a Bill would be brought in for that purpose; if not necessary, the law would be strictly enforced against associations of this description. This course would be clear and intelligible, and would, I am sure,

[1] Lord Morley's seat in Devonshire.

be successful in the House of Commons. The Lords probably would again reject the Tithe Bill; upon them let the responsibility rest.

Leaving this for your consideration, I will only add that I hope, whatever independent members of Parliament may do, no member of the Government will seek any intercourse, or ask for any truce, from O'Connell. I could have wished, I must say, that the chief Ministerial paper had not joined with O'Connell in condemning Lord Grey.

Auckland comes here to-day, and I shall have some talk with him to-morrow and then go back to Endsleigh.—Yours truly,

J. RUSSELL.

On the very day on which Lord John was thus urging the Prime Minister that no member of the Cabinet should have any intercourse with Mr. O'Connell, Mr. Abercromby, who had joined the Ministry as Master of the Mint only three months before, was sending to Lord Melbourne a long and confidential letter which he had received from the great Irish agitator imploring the Government to take some steps to break the Orange monopoly, and to seize the opportunity which a vacancy in the Irish Bench afforded them of conciliating the Roman Catholics.

I would suggest, first, that a judge should be moved from the Common Pleas to the King's Bench. . . Second, to give Blackburne the vacant seat thus created in the Common Pleas: his legal knowledge would be of use in this court, which is deplorably deficient. Third, if these suggestions be not attended to, I do implore you not to make the Solicitor-General a judge. He is utterly unfit for it. . . . You will be disgraced in the eyes of every rational man in Ireland if you make . . . Crampton a judge. . . . If you appoint Blackburne, you take out of the office of Attorney-General the most decided Orange Tory that ever filled that office. If he refuse to accept the situation, you may then dismiss him without reproach. Reproach or no reproach, you ought to discontinue him as Attorney-General. It is impossible for you to conciliate Ireland whilst he is the leading law officer of the Crown. If the vacant seat be not filled by Blackburne or Crampton it ought not to go beyond Serjeant O'Loghlen. He is a Catholic, and his appointment would show that it was not intended to allow Emancipation to continue a dead letter. Besides, all parties admit his perfect capability. . . You are aware that almost

all the functionaries who *serve* under the present Administration in Ireland are of the deepest Orange tinge. I merely submit to you that this ought not to continue.

In forwarding this letter to Lord Melbourne, Mr. Abercromby said—

The only remark I shall make on O'Connell's letter is that I wrote to Althorp on hearing of Jebb's death, suggesting that Serjeant O'Loghlen should be the new judge, assigning as my reasons that such an appointment would help to conciliate the Irish public, who are rather more favourable than formerly to the Ministry. And secondly, that it was very important to show the Orangemen that the recovery of their political influence was hopeless. This being a vacancy that was not reckoned upon, it leaves your chance of removing Blackburne just as it was, and there may be some advantage in not opening the office of Attorney-General until you have finally decided how to act with respect to O'Connell.[1]

The Government, however, refused to accede to Mr. O'Connell's wish. The Solicitor-General was made a judge; but, with a view to conciliating the Irish, Serjeant O'Loghlen was made Solicitor-General. The Ministry probably thought that by this arrangement they had satisfied the claims of their own colleague, and at the same time had done something to conciliate the Irish Roman Catholics. But events, which they could not have foreseen, were in progress which deprived Serjeant O'Loghlen's appointment of much significance; for Lord Spencer died in the beginning of November, and Lord Althorp, the leader of the House of Commons, succeeded to the peerage.

Three days after Lord Spencer's death, Lord Melbourne drove down to Brighton, where the King was staying, and submitted to him the arrangements necessary on Lord Althorp's retirement from the Commons. 'The concurrent opinion and advice of all his colleagues and those most competent to suggest any opinion with respect to the feelings of the House of Commons, was that Lord John Russell should succeed Lord Althorp as leader.'

[1] This very important correspondence was apparently sent by Lord Melbourne to Lord John, and not returned. The reader will do well to compare it with Mr. O'Connell's letters to Lord Duncannon in the *Correspondence of Daniel O'Connell*, i. 473, 477.

Lord John did not underrate the difficulty of the task which was thus proposed to him. But he thought it cowardly to refuse. He said, in joke, that if he were offered the command of the Channel fleet, and thought it his duty to accept, he should not refuse it. What his relations thought of the offer, however, may be seen from the following note of Lord Tavistock :—

> Dreadful indeed ! I suppose you must be leader, and yet I tremble for your health. Then comes the difficulty about your seat and your office. Oh that you had provided for this long ago ! There are two plans : you must either remain where you are, and make Abercromby or S. Rice Chancellor of the Exchequer, or you must boldly take your chance of a re-election and fall back upon this county if you are defeated. Charles [Lord C. Russell] would, of course, resign, as I wished and proposed to do in 1830 after the Bedford election. It would make a noise for a short time. But I see no other course but one of these two.—Yours affectionately,
>
> T.
>
> Russell [Lord Russell, eighth Duke] might resign for you in case of defeat. But that would make a much greater noise.

His relations were soon relieved from their anxiety. The King had told Lord Melbourne two months before that he 'could not bear John Russell,' and now

> His Majesty stated without reserve his opinion that he [Lord John] had not the abilities nor the influence which qualified him for the task, and observed that he would make a wretched figure when opposed by Sir Robert Peel and Mr. Stanley. . . . His Majesty had further objections. He considered Lord John Russell to have pledged himself to certain encroachments upon the Church, which his Majesty had made up his mind and expressed his determination to resist.[1]

And so, to bring the long story to a short conclusion, the King, exercising his personal authority in a manner which the sovereign of England has never since employed, dismissed his advisers and sent for the Duke of Wellington.

It so happened that Lord John was far from well at this time, and was unable, in consequence, to attend the council at which the Ministers formally took their leave of the King. He wrote explaining the reasons of his absence to the King's

[1] *Memoirs of Baron Stockmar*, i. 329 ; and Greville *Memoirs*, iii. 137.

private secretary, Sir Herbert Taylor, and received the following answer :—

St. James's Palace : Nov. 17, 1834.

My dear Lord,— . . . . His Majesty wishes me to say that your attendance at the Council upon this occasion was not necessary ; but that he regrets that indisposition should have partly been the cause of your absence. His Majesty has commanded me further to assure you of his entire satisfaction with the manner in which your Lordship has discharged the duties of your office, and of his sense of the zeal and assiduity which you have shown, as well as of your attention to his Majesty in every communication you have had to make to him.—I remain, &c., yours very faithfully,

H. TAYLOR.

A more genuine expression of regret reached him a few days afterwards :—

Chelsea College : Nov. 25, 1834.

My Lord,—I cannot resist the desire to express to your Lordship how *deeply sensible* almost every individual of this establishment feels for the zealous and constant interest which you have shown for their welfare and comfort during the short period which you have presided at the head of it. I regret I was not aware of your being here the other day, as I should have felt gratified in paying my respects to your Lordship, and in being a witness to the quiet ceremony of affixing as it were your hand and seal to the *Old Men's Paradise* [1] which has been so happily called into existence under your Lordship's kind and considerate auspices.—I have, &c.,

J. WILSON.

Among the other letters which Lord John received at the time was one from Lord Grey, declaring that he could not blame the King ; that in his opinion it was impossible for the Government to go on ; and that for the sake of the Ministers themselves, and particularly of Lord John, there was not much cause for regret. Lord Althorp in a much shorter note gave a different opinion :—

My dear John,—This is the greatest piece of folly ever committed. It is, however, a great relief to me, and I think ultimately it will have

[1] For the Paradise *vide supra*, p. 162. Lord John received letters of the same cordial kind from other members of the establishment at Chelsea.

a good effect on the state of parties in the country. We shall, however, have a little confusion at first.—Yours most truly,

ALTHORP.[1]

Althorp: Nov. 16, 1834.

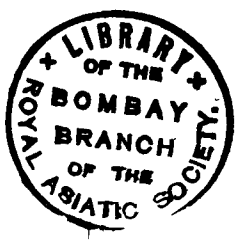
Lord John soon came round to Lord Grey's opinion that the dismissal of the Ministry was no misfortune either for himself or his colleagues. To Mr. Moore, who told him how much he was rejoiced at the turn-out of the Ministry, and that, in his opinion, nothing could be more fortunately contrived for the future interests of the party than the moment and the manner of their ejection, Lord John replied—

Saltram: Dec. 6, 1834.

My dear Moore,—I was, like Mrs. Moore, a little at a loss to understand the cause of your great joy. But I must own that since I came into the country I have been so well received by a great many old friends who were not satisfied with the Ministers that I am inclined to think with you that the King's resolution was the most fortunate thing that could happen to us. But how is the country to be governed, by Tories, Whigs, or Radicals, for the next two years? . . . However, I am only a passenger, as Tierney used to say, and as a passenger my position is as good as possible. I mean to go to Bowood on my way to town in January or sooner.—Yours truly,

J. RUSSELL.

[1] The letter to which this is a reply is published in the *Life of Lord Spencer*, p. 525. In it Lord John says, 'I suppose everything is for the best in this world; otherwise the only good which I should see in this event would be that it saves me from being sadly pommelled by Peel and Stanley, to say nothing of O'Connell.'



CHAPTER IX.

MARRIAGE AND MINISTER.

ON the dismissal of the Whig Ministry in the autumn of 1834, the King sent for the Duke of Wellington. But the Duke, realising that the struggle of the future would have to be fought in the House of Commons, and thinking that the General in command should be present at the brunt of the engagement, advised his Majesty to send for Sir Robert Peel. Here, however, arose a fresh dilemma. Sir Robert, occupied with anything rather than a Ministerial crisis, was spending the winter in Italy, and more than three weeks passed before 'the great man summoned from Rome to govern England' arrived in London. In the interval the whole conduct of the Executive Government was lodged in the hands of the Duke of Wellington; and politicians were amazed and amused to see one man discharging the business which ordinarily occupied the attention of half a dozen Ministers.

On Sir Robert Peel's arrival on December 9, this provisional system terminated. Sir Robert was enabled to form a Conservative Cabinet; and, on December 17, he startled his colleagues and the country by issuing a document known in history as the Tamworth Manifesto, in which, avowing himself favourable to Reforms both in Church and State, he appealed to 'a great and intelligent body' of electors to approve the principles on which his Ministry was founded.

In the general election which ensued, the Conservatives gained a considerable number of seats. Lord Palmerston was defeated in Hampshire; and, though Lord John was re-elected for the Southern Division of Devonshire, he had the mortification of receiving a Conservative colleague. Nor was this circumstance due to any lack of vigour on his part. At the end of November he went down to Devonshire, and on

December 2 addressed a great meeting of his constituents at Totness. His speech was generally accepted as an excellent exposition of the views of the Whigs at the time: it was thought so successful that it was reprinted from the local papers and placarded throughout the county. It was Lord John's object to show that the position which the Conservatives were assuming as Reformers could not be reconciled with their past conduct. To do so he cast a retrospective glance at the policy of parties since 1828. He showed how his own action had compelled the Wellington Administration to consent to the repeal of the Test Acts.

But, gentlemen, I think you will agree with me that it was not the Duke of Wellington that repealed the Corporation and Test Acts. To mistake him for the person who repealed them was as if one were to mistake the governor who surrenders a town by capitulation for the general who takes it. In the next year the Duke of Wellington proposed another large measure in favour of religious liberty. . . . Although entirely approving his concession, I shall always lament that that concession had not been made sooner to justice rather than later to fear.

Lord John went on to show how the Duke had opposed the little measure of Reform he had himself introduced in 1830; and how his Grace had actually proposed himself to introduce a larger measure of Reform as the price of office in 1832. He showed how the Lords, under his guidance, had either amended or rejected many of the measures which the Ministry had been anxious to carry; and that any professions of Reform which the Tories might now make were wrung from them by the necessities of their position, and were not due to the sincerity of their convictions. The newspapers, indeed, reported that the Duke had seen a great bank director and a member for the City, and assured them that he was favourable to Reform.

I confess the interview puts me in mind of that scene in 'Richard III.' when Richard, anxious to put the crown on his own head, is discovered standing between two clergymen, and when the Duke of Buckingham . . . pointing him out to the Lord Mayor, in the pious attitude in which he stands, exclaims—

'There stands his Grace between two clergymen.'

Now it would not answer the purpose for any great encouragement of Reform if we were to see the Duke of Wellington so placed. But for the present purpose two bank directors will answer that end. His Grace is favourable to Reform: he must be favourable to Reform.

'There stands his Grace between two bank directors.'

The speech made a great impression. Lord Holland wrote to him, 'Your admirable speech will do infinite good.' Lord John's father said: 'I have read your speech at Totness with much pleasure; it is a straightforward, manly speech, and your hit at his Grace between two bank directors was very happy.' And Mr. Greville, who calls it in his diary a 'very masterly performance,' wrote to Lord Tavistock, 'John's speech at Totness appears to me to have been one of the cleverest and most appropriate I ever read. . . Nothing could be more able than John's argument, or on the whole more forcible.'

The election resulted in Lord John's unopposed return, but it could not be described as a Whig victory. Some leading Tories in the county made a private suggestion that a contest might be avoided by each party returning one member for the division. One of Lord John's leading supporters strongly recommended that this compromise should be accepted, and that the Whigs should thus avoid a contest, which would in any case be serious, and might possibly prove disastrous. This arrangement was consequently concluded. Mr. Bulteel, Lord Grey's son-in-law, retired, and Lord John was returned with a Tory colleague, the late Sir John Buller.[1] The compromise enabled Lord John to return from Devonshire a little earlier than would otherwise have been possible. On January 21 he was at Bowood, 'highly pleased with the result of the election and with all that he had seen,' in Devonshire.

Lord John's presence, however, was necessary, not at Bowood but in London. Up to that time he had held an important but subordinate position in the Cabinet. Thereafter he was to be entrusted with the lead of the Whig party. The King, indeed, had declared that, in such a capacity, he would 'cut a wretched figure.' The history of the next seventeen years was to supply the answer to the King's prediction.

[1] Afterwards first Lord Churston.

Yet the King was not the only person who questioned the expediency of the arrangement. Lord John's father wrote—

My dear John,—From some passages in a letter, which you read to me yesterday, I conclude that your decision is made to take what is called the lead of the Opposition in the House of Commons. I most sincerely regret it, for I am quite convinced that neither your health nor strength of constitution is equal to this irksome and laborious task. You will have to conduct and keep in order a noisy and turbulent pack of hounds, which I think you will find it quite impossible to restrain. Reflect, that these are of all descriptions of parties, and shades of parties—Whigs, Moderates, Ultra-Whigs, Radicals, Ultra-Radicals, &c., &c., &c. How are all these to be managed? If you do (rashly as I think) undertake this difficult task, I trust they will at least give you a good second huntsman as whipper-in, to do all the dirty work, and undertake the laborious parts of the office. As your decision is now made, I imagine, all I can do is to enter my solemn protest against it. . . .—Ever your affectionate father,

B.

The anticipations of his father were in one sense fulfilled. Writing in his old age, Lord John said—

I never had greater difficulty than in leading the party which overthrew the Government of Sir Robert Peel.[1]

And the difficulty which was thus experienced was inherent in the position. For, while Sir Robert Peel could not command a majority of the House of Commons, Lord John could not bring a majority into line against him without combining moderate Liberals, Radicals, and Irish in one common movement.

If, moreover, it were no easy task to combine the Opposition, it was a difficult matter to select the ground on which they could most easily combine. It seemed to Lord John, 'as commander-in-chief of an army so variously composed, that they could not be too soon brought into action.' The earliest issue on which a battle can be fought in a new Parliament is the choice of a Speaker. Sir C. Manners Sutton had occupied the Chair of the House of Commons from 1817 to 1834. He

[1] Memorandum dictated to Lady Russell. Cf. *Recollections and Suggestions*, p. 134.

had been nominated in the Parliament of 1831 by the Whigs, and he had been specially asked to continue in the Chair in 1833, so that the Reformed House, in which there was a large number of new members, might have the benefit of his experience. The Radicals, indeed, had never acquiesced in this arrangement. They thought that a Liberal should have been placed in the Chair of a Reformed House of Commons, and their contention was much strengthened by Sir C. Manners Sutton's conduct. In the Ministerial crisis of 1831 it was stated and believed that Sir C. Manners Sutton had undertaken to accept high office and to lead the House of Commons. In the Ministerial crisis of 1834 there was no doubt that Sir C. Sutton had attended the meetings of the Privy Council. It was open, therefore, to Liberals to contend that the Speaker had taken a part in politics which was inconsistent with the neutrality attaching to his position.

While Lord John was still in Devonshire, he had received a series of letters from Lord Melbourne, asking what was to be done; stating that Mr. Abercromby positively refused to be nominated for the Chair, and suggesting Mr. Spring Rice for the office. Lord John's only objection to Mr. Spring Rice was that he had relied on his assistance in debate. But the general feeling among the Liberals in the House was different; Sir J. Hobhouse told Lord Melbourne that there was a prevalent anxiety 'to force Abercromby into it [the Chair] whether he will or not;' and it consequently became plain that, if the question of the Speakership were to be fought at all, Mr. Abercromby must of necessity be the Liberal candidate.

The question was practically settled at the end of January at a meeting at Brocket, where Lord Melbourne invited Lord John on his way from Devonshire to Woburn, and at which Sir J. Hobhouse and Mr. Poulett Thomson were also present; and the battle, which was thus arranged, took place at the meeting of Parliament on February 19. Lord John, in a speech of great moderation, vindicated the right of the majority to place a gentleman whose principles harmonised with their own in the Chair; and, while exculpating the late Speaker from the charge of intrigue, contended that his conduct during the crisis in the autumn justified the Liberal

party in opposing him. Moreover, the circumstances of the dissolution necessitated exceptional action.

The late Parliament, which he did not hesitate to say was as loyal to the Crown as any Parliament that ever existed, was suddenly dissolved; and they were referred to the prerogative of the Crown as the cause of the dissolution. He admitted it was the prerogative of the Crown to dismiss and appoint Ministers, and to dissolve Parliaments. But the people also possessed their privileges which on fit occasions were to be exercised; and, if the sword of prerogative were drawn, it was time to be prepared with the shield and buckler of popular privileges. He knew of no right more sacred, no privilege less to be infringed, than of that House placing their representative in the Chair.[1]

The attack on the Ministry was successful. Sir C. Manners Sutton was defeated, and Mr. Abercromby was placed in the Chair by a majority of ten votes. But the success was only one of the results which followed the motion. Lord John's own speech on the subject received universal praise. Commendations poured in on him from all sides. And Mr. Greville, writing for posterity, admitted that—

Lord John Russell is said to have spoken remarkably well, which is important to them as a party, being his first appearance as their leader.

The debate on the Speakership was, however, only a preliminary engagement. It was felt on all sides that the real trial of strength must take place on the Address. The issues at stake in 1835 were the prerogative of the Crown and the privilege of Parliament. The Crown had openly ventured on an act of autocracy in dismissing its advisers; and, though its conduct in doing so was consistent with the principles, it was opposed to the practice of the English constitution. As Lord Dalling wrote years afterwards, it was impossible to justify the change of Ministry 'on the ground that the late Earl Spencer was no more, and that it was necessary to replace Lord Althorp—an honest man of respectable talents—by Lord John Russell, an honest man of very eminent talents.'[2] But there was great difficulty in condemning the conduct of

[1] *Hansard*, xxvi. 43.

[2] Dalling's *Sir Robert Peel*, p. 109.

the Crown by a resolution of the House of Commons. In theory every act of the Crown is performed on the advice of a responsible Minister; and it was the peculiar characteristic of the change of Administration in 1834 that, while it was impossible to suppose that it was effected on the advice of the Ministers who were removed, it was still more difficult to imagine that it was due to the counsel of the Minister who succeeded them, and who, at the time of the crisis, was a thousand miles from the royal palace. Technically, indeed, Sir Robert Peel, by accepting office, had made himself responsible for the policy of his sovereign; but the doctrine of responsibility after the fact, however plain to lawyers and statesmen, was not likely to be equally clear to a popular assembly. Lord Spencer thought the difficulty should be faced.

I think in the House of Commons you have no option. The King having followed the change in the Administration by an appeal to the people, I think the people have a right to demand that the representatives elected in answer to that appeal should be called upon to say at once whether they approve of the dismissal of the late Government or not. . . . The continuance of the present Ministry would be a great evil. My belief is that they will be succeeded by a Radical Administration; and I admit that, from the experience I had of the hostility of the two parties, I personally dislike the Radicals more than I do the Tories. But, if an Administration, be it what it may, is permitted to continue in existence who came into office in the manner this Administration did, an injury will be done to the constitution of the country: and therefore I hope that, whoever may be their successors, they at least will be turned out.

Lord John was of the same opinion; and it appears from a memorandum in his handwriting that he wished the amendment to the Address to conclude with a humble representation

to His Majesty that the expectations of the country will not be satisfied with anything short of men who will fairly and frankly adopt the liberal and comprehensive principles on which the Reform Act was founded, or with anything less than the measures which the House of Commons recently dissolved was prepared to adopt.

But his friends thought otherwise; and the amendment

which was ultimately proposed concluded by merely lamenting that the progress of Reform

> has been interrupted and endangered by the unnecessary dissolution of a Parliament earnestly intent upon the prosecution of measures to which the wishes of the people were most anxiously and justly directed.

The amendment which was then moved was entrusted to Lord Morpeth. The debate upon it commenced on the 24th of February, and was protracted over three sittings. Lord John spoke on the second day of the debate. He had the wisdom to rest his whole case on the assertion that he had no confidence in the Government of Sir Robert Peel. He had the generosity, at the same time, to pay his great rival the compliment of saying that, on the occasions 'when he had supported the late Administration, his support was most effective, and when he opposed them his opposition was fair and manly.' But

> If I be asked to place my confidence in the right hon. baronet, . . I declare at once and without reserve that it is wholly out of my power to do so. I cannot confide in the right hon. baronet's friends: I cannot put my trust in the party with which he has long associated.

This speech—like that which he had made in the previous week—raised Lord John's reputation as a debater and a leader. Mr. Newman, writing to him from Mamhead, congratulated the Whigs on having such a leader; the same diarist, whose opinion has already been quoted, recorded that—

> Lord John Russell, by universal admission, even of his enemies, made an excellent speech. . . . John has surpassed all expectations hitherto as leader, which is matter of great exultation to his party.

But, though the success of Lord John's speech was undoubted, the results of the debate were not quite so satisfactory. The Whigs had relied on a majority of from thirty to forty votes; and the amendment was only carried by a majority of seven. On this occasion, as on the election of a Speaker, more than 300 members supported Sir Robert Peel; and it consequently became evident that, on all matters of

essential importance, the Minister could command the support of more than five-elevenths of the House of Commons.

Only one inference could be drawn from this state of things. The Whigs, it was plain, must either abandon all hope of disturbing the Ministry, or they must obtain the co-operation of all sections in the House who were opposed like themselves to a Conservative Administration. In fact, they could not command a majority without the assistance of the Radicals under Mr. Grote, and of the Irish under Mr. O'Connell.

Concert even with the Radicals, however, was hardly tolerable[1] to Whigs of the old school like Lord Grey. Concert with Mr. O'Connell was an unclean thing, not even so much as to be named among them; and by a chain of circumstances, over which Lord John had almost accidentally lost control, he was already drifting into concert with both these parties.

The circumstances were these. It is the custom of the leaders of great parties, on the eve of a new session, to ask their friends to meet them in order that they may have the opportunity of explaining their policy. But the circular invitations, which are thus sent out, are despatched by the 'whips' of the party—if the expression be permissible—and not by its leaders. The ordinary course was followed in 1835. Lord John, who, after leaving the Pay Office, had moved into lodgings in Queen Street, Mayfair, and who consequently had no room of his own large enough to accommodate two or three hundred people, asked his friends to meet him on February 18 at Lord Lichfield's house in St. James's Square. Mr. Warburton, the member for Bridport, forwarded a bundle of these circulars to Mr. O'Connell, with a private note asking that gentleman to address and send them to his Irish supporters. On the receipt of these circulars Mr. O'Connell wrote—

[1] The Duke of Bedford wrote to Lord John at the end of February: 'Grey at present seems to me to have too great a *horror* of the Radicals (so called). But there is a medium, and you may act in co-operation with these men for a great public good without trusting them or placing implicit confidence in them. Grey should remember that, without these *Radicals*, he would not have been where he is in public estimation, or have carried the Reform Bill.'

Merrion Square, Dublin: Feb. 13, 1835.

My Lord,—I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your circular on the subject of the Speaker, and the accompanying private note.[1] I have transmitted the letters to most of the Irish members. I reckon with a good deal of confidence on sixty-two Irish members on the vote for Mr. Abercromby. I should think there *cannot* be less than sixty at the very lowest.[2]

I enter very cordially into the views which I understand are entertained by your Lordship for the ensuing campaign. I think I may venture to promise that the Irish members of the popular party will avoid all topics on which they may differ with you and your friends, *until the Tories are routed*, and that you will find us perfectly ready to co-operate in any plan which your friends may deem most advisable to effect that purpose. In short, we *will be* steady allies without any mutiny in your camp. Indeed this after all is pure selfishness, because we see clearly that, if the present Administration remain in office, a civil war, with all the horrors of religious, I should say sectarian, rancour, must be the inevitable consequence. They are already letting slip the sanguinary Orange gang. Who shall succeed —Orangists or Catholics—is not of much importance; but my opinion certainly is that the Catholic party will triumph, but triumph amidst the desolation of the country and its ultimate loss to British connection. We Irish are, therefore, directly and personally interested in the defeat of the present Ministry. I know Ireland well, and am convinced that the lives of the Catholics in part of our province, and of the Protestants in the rest of the island, depend upon such a change of men as shall ensure the repression, instead of the excitement and encouragement, of the Orange faction. They will, if they come to blows, be defeated with more facility than you may imagine. But what a horrible alternative—submission to insult, injustice, and murder on the one hand, or 'bellum plus quam civile' on the other!

[1] I.e. the note from Mr. Warburton, *vide infra*.

[2] Sir J. Hobhouse had written to Lord John on February 3: 'Lord Wellesley sent a letter to me to-day from Blake (Remembrancer) stating that the choice of Abercromby and you had given great satisfaction, and that sixty-five Irish members would be in London by the 19th to vote against Sutton. Blake suggested that you should write to some of the Irish members; and, perhaps, if you would write to James Grattan, or any other comparatively quiet man, it would be as well. But I have told Lord Wellesley that it would not be expedient for you to correspond with O'Connell or any Repealer with whom you are not personally acquainted, and that I was quite sure you would not do so. At the same time I have taken care that it should be known (through Warburton) that the circulars are considered a sufficient notification and that no slight or disrespect was intended.'

And yet in sober sadness I do say that upon this alternative the present Government fling Ireland.

I leave town with my family to-morrow evening by Holyhead, so as to be in London by the 17th without fail. I hope to assist in mustering a large Irish force in St. James's Square on Wednesday.—I have the honour to be, my Lord, your very obedient, humble servant,

DANIEL O'CONNELL.

Lord John Russell.

It may, perhaps, on a matter of such importance, be as well to place side by side the draft reply which Lord John originally drew up, and the amended draft of the answer which he apparently ultimately returned to Mr. O'Connell after receiving the letter from Lord Duncannon, which will be quoted :—

Original draft marked by Lord John, 'draft perhaps too short and dry.'	*Revised draft.*

Sir,—I am much obliged to you for your letter from Dublin of the —— inst. I know not what may have been the communications made to you

respecting my intentions, but I must acknowledge that your declaration of acting with me 'until the Tories are defeated'

of my views for the ensuing campaign, but I am ready to acknowledge that the declaration of your intention to avoid all topics of difference, and to co-operate generally until the Tory Ministers are defeated,

is very frank and explicit.

Acting in the same spirit, I think it

is quite necessary

necessary

to explain that while I do not ask you to give up any of your opinions on public questions,

I do not renounce any of mine. You say that you are convinced that it is of urgent importance to remove from the Government of Ireland the Orangemen who have been brought forward and promoted by the present Ministry. I am convinced that it is necessary

you will of course understand that I do not renounce any of mine.

You say that not only the ultimate safety, but the immediate tranquillity of Ireland depend upon such a change of men as shall cause a change of

for England, although not so urgent as for Ireland, to remove from power men who never can obtain the confidence of the country.—I have, &c.

the policy pursued in that country. I am convinced that it is as necessary, although not perhaps so urgent, for England, to remove from power Ministers who do not possess, and, as I believe, never can obtain, the confidence of the country.—I have, &c.

Lord John apparently sent the earlier of these drafts to Lord Duncannon, who was the member of the Whig party best acquainted with Mr. O'Connell, and who replied to him—

Private] Tuesday.

My dear John,—I think it was Sheridan said that the Whigs always [1] built a wall to run their heads against, and this was never so likely to be exemplified as at the present moment. A very large party are prepared to be led by you, if you choose to lead them; and, with no other bond of union than that of turning out a Government which the Whigs consider most injurious to the country, they are prepared to submit to you. As a commencement you have directed a circular to be sent to all Reformers, and this among others has been sent to O'Connell, who in the excess of courtesy has informed you that he will attend your summons, and now and hereafter assist you in the objects you have in view, and for which you are asked to lead a large party of those opposed to the present Government. This is all that has occurred; for with respect to the packet of letters it was not sent in your name, nor are you in any way committed by it, as will appear by the enclosed, which, in consequence of what you told me, I procured in Cleveland Square. But really, if we are commencing an opposition to the Government by trembling at shadows and quaking at the names of O'Connell and every other Radical who may tender you assistance, our prospects of success will not be very promising, and I fear you will shortly find a very small body to lead. I wish you very much to talk this over with Melbourne, and to con-

[1] Mr. Sheridan said of the measure which produced the fall of the Whigs in 1807, that 'he had known many men knock their heads against a wall, but he had never before heard of any man who collected the bricks and built the very wall with an intention to knock out his own brains against it.' I am not aware that Mr. Sheridan thought that this conduct was usual with Whigs, as Lord Duncannon seems to imply. Lord Duncannon's letter is dated Tuesday; I assume Feb. 17, 1835.

sider well whether you will not give additional strength to the Radical party by separating yourself from them, instead of making them subservient to a certain degree, which they are now prepared to be. At all events consider well before you write, as you proposed to-day, what must settle the business finally.—Yours truly,

DUNCANNON.[1]

The enclosure referred to by Lord Duncannon was as follows :—

Those copies of Lord John Russell's circular which were sent to the Irish members were forwarded to Mr. O'Connell, not by Lord John, but by Mr. Warburton, with a note from that gentleman requesting he would put the proper address to each and forward them by post.

J. F. BROWNING.

Here, told for the first time, is the secret history of the so-called Lichfield House compact. It is evident that the overture, such as it was, was not made to Mr. O'Connell by Lord John ; that, when he became acquainted with it, he was alarmed ; and that but for the strong and, it must be added, very sensible, remonstrance of Lord Duncannon, he would have written to Mr. O'Connell in terms which would not have encouraged co-operation. Yet, if Lord Duncannon's views were founded on reason, unfortunately there were ample grounds for Lord John's uneasiness. The old Whigs, who were connected with Lord Grey, could hardly tolerate concert with the Irish. Lord Grey himself wrote—

Howick : Feb. 23, 1835.

My dear Lord John,—I have this moment received your letter. I can easily conceive that in many cases my views of what expediency requires might be modified or altered if I was on the spot.

[1] It ought to be added that Lord Duncannon had, in the preceding January, been in private communication with Mr. O'Connell. But it appears from a correspondence between Lord Lansdowne and Lord John (which is among the Lansdowne papers) that these communications were made by Lord Duncannon without authority, and were not relished by some, at least, of the future Cabinet ; and that it was practically decided that Lord John should confine himself to merely making such communications as could not be avoided, and that he should scrupulously abstain from intimate concert. Lord John, in acknowledging Lord Lansdowne's advice on Feb. 6, 1835, said that 'he did not think the line between necessary communication and intimate concert quite so broad an one' as Lord Lansdowne supposed,

But there is one point on which my opinion and my resolution can admit of no change. I have already stated to you and to others that nothing could induce me to be a party to anything like concert or communication with O'Connell and the Radicals. . . . Though I agree with you, therefore, as to the propriety, I should rather say the duty, of acting upon the principles which you always professed, and not rejecting the support of those who are willing to assist you in measures prescribed by those principles, I could not read without the deepest regret, I might say with absolute dismay, the account of your having written to O'Connell, Hume, &c., to attend the meeting on the question of the Speakership. The view taken by Howick of these proceedings I entirely approve; and, though his motive for attending the meeting was such as I cannot condemn, I should have been better satisfied if he had adhered to his original intention of staying away. That he will do so, if unhappily any future meeting of a similar description should take place, I cannot allow myself to doubt.

Having said this, I willingly turn to a more agreeable topic, and I am sure you will give me credit for the sincere pleasure which I received from the accounts, sent to me from all quarters, of the success of your speech. Be assured there does not exist a more sincere well-wisher to your fame and happiness than myself. . . . —Ever, dear Lord John, yours most sincerely,

GREY.

The French saying, 'Ce n'est que le premier pas qui coûte,' might have told Lord Grey that concert once begun could not be abruptly terminated. Lord Tavistock, indeed, owned to Mr. Greville that the meeting at Lichfield House had alarmed and disgusted many of the old Whigs, and that it was settled that there should be no more such meetings. But if there were no more meetings the various sections of the Opposition agreed in giving a great dinner to their new leaders.

There were two hundred and sixty present at Lord John Russell's dinner, and twenty more who were absent put their names down. O'Connell, who declared it was the most delightful evening he ever passed in his life, publicly acknowledged John Russell as his leader, and the Radicals were all present but Hume.[1]

The solitary absentee was meditating a new movement,

[1] Greville, iii. 238. Cf. Melbourne, ii. 100.

With Lord John's concurrence, Mr. Hume proposed to curb the power of the Ministers by limiting the supplies. But the proposal raised fresh remonstrances among the old Whigs. Mr. Spring Rice declared that it was doubtful whether he could support the motion. Lord Grey, writing from Woburn, where he was resting on his way to London, said—

> After you went I wrote to Howick, reporting very fully my feelings upon this matter. They are so strong that, if I were in the House of Commons, I should certainly both speak and vote against the motion.

Lord John, after such communications, had nothing for it but to persuade Mr. Hume to give way. To quote his own words:—

> A notion prevailed even among Liberals that Sir Robert Peel should have a fair trial; an advantage which had been denied to Lord Melbourne. It seemed to me that this fair trial would be given, and the House of Commons would still have in its hands the power of the purse, the citadel of its strength, if the supplies were only voted for three months. But when the party was consulted upon this suggestion it was found that there were several who feared that any limitation of the ordinary vote in supply would affect public credit and alarm the country. I therefore reluctantly renounced this intention. . . . The plain and obvious plan of voting the supplies for three months being given up, the question naturally occurred, in what manner could Sir Robert Peel obtain that fair trial which his own partisans and many independent Whigs called for on his behalf. There appeared no question so well fitted for an *experimentum crucis* as the question of the Irish Church.

Such was the account which Lord John gave in his old age of the motives which actuated him in 1835. He was probably himself aware in using this language that he attached a very different sense to the words 'a fair trial' from that which the Tories generally, and some of his Whig friends, applied to them. They wished that an opportunity should be given for 'trying' the use which the Minister would make of his accession to office. He, on the contrary, was determined to try whether Sir Robert Peel ought to be Minister at all.[1] As the conduct of the more moderate

[1] Lord John saw this distinctly enough at the time. Sir Robert Peel, on

Whigs made it hopeless to obtain this decision by a vote of want of confidence, or even by the refusal of the supplies for more than a limited period, no more fitting issue could have been raised than that which Lord John proposed. And, indeed, his own hands were to some extent forced in the matter. Mr. Ward, the author of the Appropriation clause, wrote to him on March 3 to announce his intention of proposing on the 12th a resolution asserting 'the right of the State' to appropriate the surplus revenues of the Irish Church to other than ecclesiastical purposes. Lord John was blamed at the time for replying rather shortly that 'he himself proposed to submit a motion on the subject.'[1] But the reply was surely wise. If it were desirable that such a motion should be proposed at all, it was right that it should be brought forward by the responsible leader of the Opposition.

Yet there was a further difficulty to be surmounted. In the break-up of the Whig Administration in the summer of 1834, the Whigs had endeavoured to stave off disunion by issuing a commission of inquiry to ascertain what were the surplus revenues of the Church. Lord John had himself defended the necessity for inquiry.

> I want facts established . . . by the best evidence that can be procured on the spot. . . . We wish to ascertain the numbers of persons belonging to the established Church, the number attending divine service, and the increase of the members of the established Church of late years.[2]

But at the beginning of March the commission had not reported; and, though Lord John through Lord Duncannon

March 16, urged the Opposition to bring forward a vote of want of confidence; and Lord John, in reply, said that 'the ground on which the right hon. gentleman had stood ever since the formation of the Government was that, though the House might not give the Ministry implicit confidence, they were entitled to a fair trial, to be allowed an opportunity of bringing forward their measures;' and later on in the debate he divulged the open secret which was influencing him. 'If the Opposition had brought forward any direct vote of want of confidence, the right hon. baronet might have gained the votes of a great number of persons on the ground of being unfairly treated.'—*Hansard*, xxvi. 1030, 1031.

[1] Greville, iii. 222.

[2] *Hansard*, xxiii. 800.

endeavoured to quicken its steps, the preliminary reports were not in the hands of the Government till the end of March, and were not ready for presentation for some time afterwards. It was open then for the Government to contend that the result of the inquiry was not known, and that the House of Commons had not the materials before it which would enable it to determine whether the Irish Church had any surplus revenues. Yet Lord John was almost compelled to move; for the Ministry, which had already explained how it proposed to deal with the grievances of the Nonconformists by providing for their marriages and by the reform of the ecclesiastical courts, introduced on March 20 a proposal with respect to Irish tithes, and there was a manifest inconvenience in discussing the details of the Tithe Bill until the question of appropriation had been definitively settled.

And in giving notice of his motion for a committee of the whole House on the Irish Church, Lord John had reason to hope that the first report of the commission would be in the hands of members before the day fixed for the debate; finding that there were some doubts on the point, he asked Sir H. Hardinge, the Chief Secretary for Ireland, a question on the subject; and as Sir Henry was unable to give him any definite information upon it he decided on postponing his motion for a week, while Sir Robert Peel undertook to defer the second reading of the Government measure until after the debate on Lord John's motion.

The struggle which thus commenced has rather an historical than a biographical interest. After a four nights' debate Lord John's resolution was carried by 322 votes to 289, and the House went into committee. 'On the following evening in committee Lord John proposed a further resolution for the local application of the surplus revenues of the Church to the general education of all classes of Christians,' and the committee adopted the proposition by 262 votes to 237. On April 7 he proposed that no measure upon the subject of tithes in Ireland can lead to a satisfactory and final adjustment which does not embody the principle thus laid down. The House adopted the new motion by 285 votes to 258, and on the following morning Sir Robert Peel, seeing that it was

impossible to protract the struggle, resigned his office into the King's hands.

As this struggle proceeded, it was evident that the interest which attaches to a personal contest had been restored to English politics. In former periods the rivalry of Sir Robert Walpole and Lord Bolingbroke, of Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox; in the nineteenth century of Mr. Canning and Lord Castlereagh, had given zest to political warfare. But, from the death of Lord Londonderry in 1822 to the spring of 1835, a personal conflict of this kind had not existed. Mr. Canning and Sir Robert Peel were hardly ever pitted against one another as rivals; and, after Mr. Canning's death, Sir Robert Peel was the undisputed champion of the political arena. He could hardly find 'a foeman worthy of his steel.' No one could have foreseen that such an opponent would be found in the politician whose constitutional delicacy had constantly interfered with his Parliamentary attendance. Even Lord Melbourne, when he put forward Lord John as a leader, did not venture on disputing the King's objection that he would make 'a wretched figure.' He thought, no doubt, that he was playing the best card in his hand, but he had no knowledge that he was laying down the commanding trump.

The months of February and March 1835 suddenly revealed the powers which Lord John had hitherto held in reserve. Called upon to command a disunited party, he succeeded in reconciling their differences and in leading them from victory to victory. And the success which he thus achieved was gained over no mere tyro like himself, but over the first Parliamentary statesman of his own time, and, as some men would say, the first Parliamentary statesman of any time.

During the conflict both of the combatants showed themselves at their best. Sir Robert Peel, indeed, had never seemed so great as during his short Administration of 1835. The breadth of his policy and the skill with which he defended it were equally admirable. But Lord John made a more startling impression both on the House and on the country; for, while the leader of the Tory party had long been regarded as the first man in the House of Commons, the

great capacity of Lord John had been unrecognised or even unknown.

What was thought of Lord John's conduct at the time may perhaps be shown from a single extract. Mr. Charles Gore, who almost immediately afterwards became his private secretary, wrote to him on April 8—

> Well and truly did Lord Wellesley say to me on Sunday, 'Lord John's conduct as leader has been admirable, and he has shown himself more than equal to so difficult a task. He possesses all the temper and tact of Lord Althorp, with ten thousand times his eloquence and power.'

Foemen worthy of one another's steel are apt to rise in each other's estimation. It is pleasant to be able to say that the chief combatants in the political arena in 1835 maintained throughout the struggle a mutual regard, and the leader of one party came up to the leader of the other, shook hands with him, and congratulated him on his coming marriage.[1]

For, though Lord John's nights had been given to the House of Commons, and though his days had been almost constantly occupied with seeing reluctant followers, and with framing and recasting critical resolutions, he had found time to engage himself to be married. Lady Ribblesdale, on whom his choice fell, was the widow of the second Lord Ribblesdale—a nobleman who died at a comparatively early age in December 1832—and the sister of Mr. Lister, of Armitage Park, Staffordshire, a gentleman well known in literary circles as the author of 'Granby,' and still better known, both in the world of letters and fashion, as the husband of Mrs. (afterwards Lady Theresa) Lister. By her first husband Lady Ribblesdale had four children. The eldest, Adelaide (now Mrs. Maurice Drummond); the second, Thomas, third Lord Ribblesdale; the third, Isabel (Mrs. Warburton); and the fourth, Elizabeth (Lady Melvill).

Lord John had met Lady Ribblesdale for the first time at Torquay during the Devonshire election. Mr. Sharp, who was known in social circles as 'Conversation Sharp,' was passing the winter there with his ward, Miss Kinnaird, who was after-

[1] Moore's *Memoirs*, vii. 129.

wards married to Mr. Drummond, the Secretary to the Irish Government. Mr. Sharp was intimately acquainted with Lord John, and Lord John paid him a visit. Lady Ribblesdale was also passing the winter at Torquay, and the hotel at which she was staying was below the terrace in which Mr. Sharp was residing. In company with the future Mrs. Drummond, Lord John used to walk down a steep zigzag path which led from Mr. Sharp's house to the hotel and call on Lady Ribblesdale. One brilliant cloudless day—so the story runs—Lord John, with his usual companion, paid Lady Ribblesdale their morning visit, and persuaded her to follow them home to luncheon. As he was returning up the steep ascent Lord John, who was very silent, suddenly stopped and said, 'I have left my umbrella at the hotel.' Miss Kinnaird with a woman's wit replied, 'Oh, then I advise you to go back immediately, for it may rain.' Lord John said, 'Certainly,' and at once returned. Some time afterwards, when the marriage was arranged, Lady Ribblesdale asked Miss Kinnaird to be one of her bridesmaids; and Lord John wrote to her, 'Her sister will of course be principal bridesmaid and hold her gloves, another bridesmaid will carry her bouquet, but you must carry an umbrella.' Fifty years afterwards, in 1885, umbrellas became important articles in a statesman's panoply; in 1835 they fulfilled apparently a more human purpose, and discharged their allotted task with equal efficacy.

Rumours of the attachment had reached Lady William Russell in January, and the Duke in February.[1] No member of Lord John's family, however, was acquainted with Lady Ribblesdale; none of them seem to have paid any attention to the report till the marriage was formally announced in the

[1] Lord Tavistock, writing to congratulate his brother on March 20, said, 'Squire John [the Duke] told me six weeks ago that he had heard of it, but we treated the report lightly, never having heard you speak of her.' Lady William, writing to 'My dear Johnnikins' from Stuttgart on April 2, said, 'My mother [Mrs. Rawdon], who knows everything, announced to me your marriage three months ago from Berlin. Perhaps you did not think of it yourself at that time, but she positively did, and named the lady; and yet she is not a Scotchwoman, and has not the gift of second-sight. So I am saved the trouble and emotion of surprise.' In the same letter Lady William said, 'My boys are very much astonished, and the two little ones will not believe in the four children. That is a joke, they are sure.'

last half of March. With a caution, which was perhaps natural in a father, but which seems rather out of place in a Duke of Bedford, the Duke in the first instance raised questions about settlements. But his doubts were removed in forty-eight hours.

Woburn Abbey: March 22, 1835.

My dear John,—I have nothing to add to my last letter, except to give my entire approbation of your marriage. The sooner it can take place the better, as I wish to get to Endsleigh before Easter week.—Ever your affectionate father,

B.

And again :—

Woburn Abbey: Tuesday [? March 31].

My dear John,—You are perfectly welcome to bring your bride to the old abbey. I hope the time I suggested to you will suit. The Duchess says you are quite wrong in saying the Ministry are shaken to the foundation. They never had a foundation to shake. . . . —Your affectionate father,

B.

The Duke had his way. Lord John's marriage was first announced on March 20. Ten days later the great debate on the Irish Church commenced; nine days later still, Sir R. Peel resigned; on the following morning Lord John was married at St. George's, Hanover Square, and at two o'clock, after breakfast at Kent House, he and his bride drove down to Woburn.

In the meanwhile active negotiations were in progress for the formation of a new Government. After an ineffectual attempt to persuade Lord Grey to form an Administration either alone or in concert with others, the King on April 11, the day of Lord John's marriage, sent for Lord Melbourne. Lord Melbourne at once called the leading members of his former Government together, and, with their aid, drew up the following memorandum, which was sent to Lord Grey:—

Lansdowne House: April 11, 1835.

Having well considered the state of parties and the circumstances of the country, we are decidedly of opinion that no Administration which will command any public confidence, or give any promise of stability, can be formed without uniting every element of strength which the present state of parties and opinions admits of combining;

and most of all we think it desirable that you should be induced to give your active support and assistance in office. We submit to you this as our deliberate judgment, and earnestly entreat you to give it your most serious consideration. It would naturally be our wish that you should place yourself at the head of the Treasury; but, if you should for any reason be desirous of declining that situation, we trust that you will not refuse to fill the post of Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, which will secure to the public the benefit of your abilities and experience, and to your colleagues the protection and encouragement of your countenance and authority. Lord John Russell has not been informed of our intention to make this communication, but we feel no doubt whatever of his entire concurrence in it. We have not thought it expedient to incur any delay by inviting the agreement of others, but we are confident that it would be cordially and universally given.

(Signed) MELBOURNE, LANSDOWNE, VASSALL HOLLAND, PALMERSTON, J. S. RICE.

A copy of this paper was forwarded by Lord Melbourne to the King, who desired 'the Viscount to make known to Lord Grey his Majesty's anxious wish to see the Earl at the head of the Government.'[1] But neither the wishes of the King nor the desire of his old colleagues prevailed with Lord Grey, and on the 12th Lord Melbourne found himself compelled to proceed with his task without his former chief's assistance.

Lord Melbourne at once sent the following letter to Lord John:—

South Street: April 12, 1835.

My dear John,—Lord Grey entirely declines taking any part, and the King considers me as employed in making arrangements. I am sorry for it, but you must see the necessity of your immediately coming to London. Here is much that must be decided without further delay. The questions of Brougham and Palmerston are of the utmost importance, full as much as any questions of principle can be. Pray do not delay.—Yours faithfully,

MELBOURNE.[2]

[1] The King's letter to Lord Melbourne is published by Mr. Torrens in Lord Melbourne's *Life*, ii. 103. The memorandum addressed to Lord Grey has not, I believe, been previously published.

[2] Lord Palmerston, it must be recollected, was at this time out of Parliament. He was the most Conservative of Lord Melbourne's old colleagues, and it was apparently intended to exclude him from office, Lord John himself taking the

And so, within forty-eight hours of its commencement, Lord John's honeymoon was abruptly terminated, and he was suddenly involved in all the difficulties of Cabinet-making. The task proved easier than was anticipated. Lord Brougham, much to his annoyance, was left out; Lord Palmerston became Foreign Secretary; and Lord John took the Home Office. His brother, Lord William, wrote to him from Stuttgart—

> You are more useful to Ireland where you are, otherwise I should have been glad to have seen you at the Foreign Office. . . . On the Continent the Conservatives look upon you as a most dangerous and detestable democrat. But they would have preferred you to Palmerston, who gives them all the stomach-ache.

There was, however, another question of far more serious importance than the exclusion of Lord Brougham or the inclusion of Lord Palmerston in the Administration. No one could doubt that the victory of the Whigs had only been secured by the assistance of Mr. O'Connell, and that the defection of the Irish would convert, at any moment, their majority into a minority. In his communications with Mr. O'Connell Lord John had made no promises and no compact. But he was too loyal in the hour of his victory to overlook the claims which Mr. O'Connell had established by his conduct. Mr. Ball, in a curious paper in 'Macmillan's Magazine,' has shown that office was actually offered to Mr. O'Connell, who announced the offer to a friend in Mr. Ball's presence, and a few hours afterwards begged his confidant to regard the communication as private, as circumstances had occurred

Foreign Secretary's seals (Greville, iii. 253). Lord Brougham naturally resented his own exclusion, and was inclined to blame Lord John and his other former colleagues for not standing up for him. But Lord John had, in fact, two months before suggested that he should be Secretary of State in any future Whig Government. Lord Melbourne, however, writing on Feb. 7, 1835, replied: 'The more I think of it the more I am convinced that whatever may happen with respect to Brougham, it can never be safe to place him, as you suggest, in an important executive office. Recollect, as Chancellor he could do nothing. He could talk, God knows, . . . but he could do no act. If he were Secretary of State you would find things done without your privity which you could neither amend nor recall, nor blame him for doing.' Cf. *Recollections and Suggestions*, 135 *sq.*

which had made it impossible for him to accept office.[1] The offer, which was made at Lord John's suggestion, was ultimately abandoned in deference to the objections of the King. But so strongly did Lord John feel in the matter that he sent a message to Mr. O'Connell to say that—

I was quite willing to renounce office for myself if he thought his exclusion was an injustice which he would be disposed to resent. O'Connell in the handsomest manner declined to put forward any pretensions on his own part, and expressed his wish that I should take a leading part in the Administration. I communicated this result to Lord Grey, Lord Melbourne, and Lord Holland, who were assembled at Lord Grey's house to consider of the formation of a new Ministry. Lord Grey said to me, 'I did not know you were so far engaged to O'Connell.' I replied, 'I have no engagement with him whatever, but I thought it due to him, considering the part he has acted, to do what I have done.'[2]

On April 18 the new Cabinet was practically complete, and writs were moved for the seats vacated by the Ministers on acceptance of office. On Monday the 20th there was a Cabinet Council; and on the 24th Lord John and his bride were arriving in Devonshire for the election.

The occasion was sufficiently anxious. Mr. Buller, of Stoke Raleigh, his chief supporter in the county, wrote, on April 19, that he had very little doubt of success; and, if distant sympathy could help a popular candidate, addresses of grateful thanks to Lord John flowed in from York and other places. The citizens of Bedford did not confine their sympathy to words, but sent 100*l.* to Lord John's London committee as a small proof of the deep interest which they took in the election. But neither Mr. Buller's confidence nor distant sympathy could have deceived Lord John. He knew how defeat had been avoided three months before by dividing the representation with the Tories, and he faced the contest with much hesitation. His fears were fully justified. The Tory candidate, Mr. Parker, won by 627 votes.[3]

[1] *Macmillan's Magazine* for 1873, p. 222. Mr. Ball relates the anecdote of 1837; but I think it plain the incident must have occurred in 1835.

[2] From a memorandum dictated by Lord Russell to Lady Russell.

[3] The final numbers were: Mr. Parker, 3,755; Lord John, 3,128 votes.

His father wrote at once—

Belgrave Square: Wednesday.

My dear John,—You are defeated but not disgraced. Like Francis I. you have lost everything but honour. They must prepare fresh triumphs for you in some other quarter and that without delay. . . .—Your affectionate Father,

B.

A seat was easily procured. At the previous election, Colonel Fox, the son of Lord and Lady Holland, had been returned for Stroud. He wrote to Lord John, with whom he had been on terms of closest intimacy from boyhood.

Addison Road: May 6.

My dear John,—I suppose some arrangement has been made in case of what has happened so unfortunately. . . . But, as I am not certain of this, I lose no time in letting you know that Stroud is at your service, and I feel sure that you would be elected unanimously and without expense. I shall write this day to my right hand man, to say what I have done, but he will not, of course, reveal it till I hear from you.—Ever yours sincerely,

C. R. Fox.

The offer was accepted. Colonel Fox retired from Parliament; and Lord John, sixteen days afterwards, took his seat in the House of Commons as the member for Stroud.

Few men had probably ever passed through so much as had happened to Lord John during the forty days which had followed his marriage. Yet, busy as he had been, he had found time to think of an old friend. On the Sunday which preceded the Devonshire election, he wrote the following letter:—

Mamhead: May 3.

My dear Moore,—I have been too busy, since I last saw you, to be able to write on any but public concerns. Having, however, a little time to spare to-day, I wish to consult you on your own private affairs. I am now in a better position than I formerly was for serving my friends. Still there are very few opportunities of finding any situation that will suit a gentleman who does not belong to a profession. It has occurred to me that a pension from the Crown for one or both of your sons might be a source of comfort to you in days of sickness or lassitude. But perhaps, on the contrary, the

offer might be displeasing to you, and I do not like to speak to Melbourne upon it without consulting you. If you have anything else to suggest which is more agreeable to your wishes, pray tell me freely as an old friend, and I will answer you as a friend and not as a Minister.

I see that Mr. Barnes, not satisfied with assailing me for re forming the Irish Church, has been raking up my private conversation at a party at Devonshire House, among a number of ladies and dandies. I should have thought a barrister and a scholar would not have condescended to such weapons. Is it revenge for my going with you to the Haymarket?—Yours truly,

J. RUSSELL.[1]

[1] Sir R. Peel had very unwisely decided on appointing Lord Londonderry Ambassador at St. Petersburg. The *Times*, of which Mr. Barnes was the editor, in an article on April 28th, declared that Lord John had met Lord Londonderry at Devonshire House, had taken an opportunity of telling him that he considered the attacks made on him unfair, and had promised that he would have nothing to do with any attack made on him in the House of Commons. A few days afterwards, however, Mr. Sheil made a motion condemning the appointment, and Lord John supported the motion both by his voice and his vote. The *Times* declared that it was 'lamentable to think that the rancour of party feeling should so far prevail over an otherwise honourable mind as to tempt a man like Lord John Russell to make a gratuitous offer of friendship, and then fly from it, as he did, without the slightest reason for doing so.' And the Devonshire Conservatives, using the article, printed it as a placard, heading it in bold type, 'Disreputable Conduct of Lord J. Russell,' and called upon the electors to say whether they would 'confide the dearest rights of Englishmen to a man who, it is proved, is not to be trusted or believed in private society.' The charge created so much heat that Lord John was compelled to send a full explanation of the matter to Mr. Fulford, one of the leading Conservatives of the county. It seems that Lord Londonderry had spoken to Lord John about the Russian Embassy at a party at Devonshire House; that Lord John had made the natural observation that if any one was to blame for the appointment it was the Secretary for Foreign Affairs rather than the Ambassador; and that, so thinking, he had dissuaded an English member of the House of Commons from moving an address to the Crown to cancel the appointment. Two days afterwards Mr. Sheil, without any concert with Lord John, moved for a copy of Lord Londonderry's appointment; and Mr. Cutlar Fergusson, in seconding the motion, read an extract from one of Lord Londonderry's speeches, in which the Poles were described as 'the rebellious subjects' of the Emperor of Russia. 'This speech changed my opinion, as, I believe, it did that of others, upon the question. But I took no part in the debate. On the following Monday I asked Sir Robert Peel whether it was still intended to persist in the appointment, and upon his reply I applauded Lord Londonderry for the course he had taken. . . . On the following Wednesday, at a ball at Devonshire House, Lord Londonderry spoke to me again, and expressed his surprise at what had occurred. But as he at the same time held out his hand, and I was engaged in other conversation more suited to the time and the occasion,

Mr. Moore replied—

Sloperton: May 7, 1835.

My dear Lord John,—My first feelings on receiving your most friendly letter yesterday were those of surprise, joy, and thankfulness. I had long given up every little dream that might once have haunted me with respect to my chances of being ever thought of by my great friends, in the way of office or place, partly because time and other circumstances have made me a difficult person to serve, and partly because I began almost to believe that what Swift says in one of his letters might be true: 'I never,' he says, 'knew a Ministry do anything for those whom they had made companions of their pleasures.' Your letter, however, proves that this is not always the case, and I am, from my heart, grateful for your recollection of me in the midst of so many cares and distractions.

With respect to the manner in which you propose to serve me—I mean, by doing something for my poor boys—you have perhaps chosen the only mode of pecuniary aid which I should not at once have declined. I do not know whether I ever told you that, when my father died, Lord Wellesley—then Lord Lieutenant—very kindly, of himself, sent to offer a pension for my mother. But this, coming from a party then adverse to my own in politics, I thought it right to refuse, and the Lansdownes, among others, thought me foolish in so doing. That I want some little help is but too true. I live from hand to mouth, and [am] not always sure that there will be anything in the former for the latter. You may form some notion of my means of getting on when I tell you that for my history just published I received 750*l.*, and was two years and a half employed upon it. You should never have been annoyed with this view of the interior but for your kind remembrance of me, so that you see what you have brought upon yourself.

To return to the main point (for it is just post-hour): 'to be or *not* to be' a pensioner—that is the question. If myself alone, or even my *other* self (into the bargain), were concerned, I think I should not hesitate as to my answer, but the responsibility of refusing such timely aid for the poor boys is more than I feel inclined to encounter. All I shall therefore say, at this moment, is that I leave the matter entirely in your hands—think for me, feel for me, and act for me in that capacity which you have always shown yourself so worthy to fill, of a true and real friend. I think you may even call into council

I did not go into any explanation.' Lord John added, 'If private society is to be made the rehearsal of public debate, all its charm and confidence will be destroyed.'

also Lord Melbourne, whom I have known at least long enough to embolden me to count upon his good will. Whatever you both think I *may* do, I *will* do.—Ever most truly yours,

THOMAS MOORE.

Lord Melbourne, to whom Lord John at once wrote, suggested that the pension should be given to Mr. Moore himself and not to his children; and, in the following August, this arrangement, which was warmly supported by Lord Lansdowne, was carried out, and a pension of 300*l.* a year was awarded to the poet.

The pleasure which this pension gave will be recollected by those who have read Mr. Moore's memoirs. Mrs. Moore, 'in a fever of hope and anxiety,' told her husband that she should thenceforward indulge in butter with her potatoes. And the time came—and sooner than might have been anticipated—when illness and grief incapacitated Mr. Moore from all exertion, and the pension had to provide the potatoes as well as the butter. It is pleasant to find, too, Lord John, in editing his friend's memoirs, ascribing to his sovereign the bounty which had been really procured on his own intercession.

Happily for Moore and his partner, they had a certain income derived from the bounty of the sovereign, which flowed on indeed in a stream not exuberant but perpetual. On this income Mr. Moore regulated his expenses, and regulated them so as to incur no debts.

CHAPTER X.

THE SESSIONS OF 1835–1836.

THE Administration formed by Lord Melbourne in the spring of 1835 was destined to remain in office under two sovereigns and in two Parliaments for a period of more than six years. Its achievements and its failures occupy a very striking page in the political history of England during the nineteenth century. Yet the fortunes of the Ministry throughout this time were subjected to great variations. From 1835 to the death of William IV. it was distinguished for its activity, and, with one striking exception, for its success. From the accession of the present Queen in 1837 to the Bedchamber question in 1839, its career was one rather of compromise than of victory; while, from its resumption of office in 1839 to its final fall in 1841, it was doomed to inaction, to which it ultimately succumbed. It is remarkable, however, that, as the domestic policy of the Ministry declined in energy, its foreign policy increased in vigour, till, in its closing days, the career of Mehemet Ali was checked by the bombardment of Acre, and a possible advance of Russia in the East was stopped by the occupation of Afghanistan.

During the first of the three periods, which have been thus enumerated, the Whig Ministers were constantly exposed to a vigorous Opposition. The King formed a violent antipathy to his new advisers. He had taken the extreme course of abruptly dismissing them in the previous autumn. He was mortified and annoyed at being forced to recall them to his counsels. Mr. Greville declared, on the authority of Lord Adolphus Fitzclarence, that William IV. abhorred all his Ministers, but that he hated Lord John the most of all. According to the same authority, the monarch's only interval of pleasure 'was during the Devonshire election, when he was delighted

at John Russell's defeat.' With these opinions, the King not merely used his influence to oppose the policy of his Ministers. He treated them, for many months after they first took office, both in public and private, with a discourtesy which is hardly credible. He declined to give any dinner-parties because he could not do so without inviting them, and he declared that he would rather see the devil than any one of them in his house.[1] His language towards them in the Council Chamber was occasionally, to use the Prime Minister's words, 'outrageous;' and, though his letters were usually written by Sir Herbert Taylor, and couched in the courteous language which characterised all Sir Herbert's productions, he occasionally scrawled some hurried note with his own pen, in which he made no attempt to conceal his feelings.[2]

[1] Greville *Memoirs*, iii. 265.

[2] Mr. Greville has recorded the violent language which the King used to Sir C. Grey on July 1, 1835, at a council at which he was present (*Memoirs*, vol. iii. 272, and cf. p. 276). Lord Melbourne wrote to Lord John on July 5: 'The affair of last Wednesday at the Privy Council begins to assume a serious and awkward aspect. After the Cabinet yesterday Glenelg came and showed me a letter from Taylor, declaring upon the part of the King that he did allude to Glenelg. . . . We can therefore no longer conceal from ourselves what we know to be the truth, and the question is whether such outrageous conduct can be passed over without further observation. . . . Censuring a Minister before others for confidential advice given a month ago; condemning the Secretary of State to the individual who is about to act under the Secretary of State's orders; giving verbal instructions for which no one is responsible, and which may conflict with those for which the Secretary of State is responsible—form altogether a mass of muddle and impropriety such as never, probably, was equalled before.' The Cabinet drew up a minute of remonstrance, which it was decided that Lord Melbourne should lay before the King. Lord Melbourne wrote to Lord John: 'I stated to the King all that was in the minute which we had prepared. He heard me with great patience and attention, and then said that he had been so angry with Glenelg for what he had said to him about Canada, and that it had rested so much upon his mind, that he could not restrain himself; but that he admitted the full force of all my observations, and felt that he had said more than he ought to have said. I could, of course, push it no further.' A week after this incident Lord John himself received his first holograph letter from his Majesty. It ran as follows (the 'individual' referred to in it was Major Stanhope, son-in-law to the Duke of Leinster, whom Lord Mulgrave had selected to succeed Sir C. Vernon as Usher of the Black Rod in the order of St. Patrick. The italics are the King's): 'The King yesterday received from Ulster King of Arms a Requisition to swear in, at the Chapter of the Order of St. Patrick, an Individual as Usher of the Black Rod. H. M., *never* having heard from the Home Secretary of State of such an

But the King's dislike gradually wore away. His correspondence with Lord John in 1835 commences with frequent intimations of his disapproval; as the autumn advanced it contains constant expressions of concurrence and satisfaction; till at last the monarch, who was naturally the most hospitable of men, ceased to be inhospitable; and on the 15th of November ordered Sir Herbert Taylor to tell Lord John that he expected that those of his Ministers who attended his Council would 'do him the pleasure of dining with him.'

The King's hostility to the new Government was only one of the difficulties which Ministers had to encounter. In the House of Lords they had to face a majority led by Lord Lyndhurst, who did not scruple to mutilate their measures and to embarrass their movements. The attitude of the Lords was hardly compensated by the confidence of the Commons. The debates and the divisions which had preceded the fall of Sir Robert Peel had sufficiently shown that the Liberal superiority could only be maintained by the continuance of the alliance between Whigs, Radicals, and Irish; and these three parties, if they were equally opposed to Sir Robert

appointment, *commands* Lord John Russell to write *without* loss of time to inquire into the conduct of the Earl of Mulgrave in *thus* passing over the *previous* sanction of *the* Sovereign, and neglecting his duty to the King.' Poor Sir Herbert Taylor, the most courteous of men, ordered to despatch this abrupt communication to the Minister, enclosed it in a note in which he endeavoured to remove the impression which his master's letter was calculated to make. Lord Mulgrave sent a full explanation of his conduct through Lord John. But the King was not satisfied, and complained publicly at the levee that Major Stanhope's appointment was the most outrageous insult ever offered to a monarch. The King's little speech found its way into the papers; and Lord Mulgrave, on July 28, wrote to Lord John to know whether it was true, and if so, what he should do. He was with difficulty persuaded by Lord Melbourne and Lord John to do nothing, on the ground that he only fared like his fellows. About the same time (July 26) Lord John received the following letter from the King on the subject of a proposed reduction of the militia staff, on which the Ministry had resolved: 'The King has, of course, received Lord John Russell's communication respecting the intended reduction of the staff of the militia, on which his Majesty conceives it to be his *bounden* duty to state his *entire* disapprobation of the measure, as *highly* dangerous to the Crown and the interests of the empire at large.' The King ultimately gave way, but he gave way on conditions which he thought proper publicly to announce in his Council Chamber in a speech, which was duly entered by the Clerk of the Council in his diary.—*Greville Memoirs*, iii. 311.

Peel, had few other ideas in common with one another. The majority, moreover, which Lord John commanded, and which had not been too large in the first instance, was reduced at the outset by his own defeat in Devonshire, and by Conservative victories in two other important counties; while, with the exception of himself, the Treasury Bench opposed to Sir Robert Peel, and soon afterwards to Lord Stanley and Sir James Graham, had not a single debater of weight and experience.

Such was the condition of affairs when, towards the end of May 1835, Lord John resumed his seat in the House of Commons. The policy of the Government which he represented had practically been determined by the debates which had led to the overthrow of the Conservative Administration. The Liberals had expressed their regret that Reform had been interrupted by the unnecessary dissolution of Parliament, and they had defined Reform to mean the Reform of Municipal Corporations; the removal of the chief grievances of which the Dissenters complained by the alteration of the Marriage Laws, the opening of the Universities, and the abolition of Church Rates; the settlement of a great agricultural grievance by the commutation of tithes; and above all the adoption of a just policy towards Ireland. Men there were, eager on all these subjects, ready to urge them forward at all hazard. But Lord John declined to imitate the example of his great rival or to risk the success of one measure by occupying the time of Parliament with other Bills. In reply to an appeal to him to deal at once with the question of church rates, he said on May 25—

> If he had gained anything by the experience of the last three years, in which he had been a member of the Government, it was a knowledge of the impropriety of undertaking too much at one time. . . . Therefore, ready, as he felt, to consider any questions that had been brought before the House by the late Government, willing as he was to pay attention to measures proposed by individual members, he would not undertake on the part of the Government to go further than those two measures of Municipal Reform in England and Wales, and the regulation of tithes in Ireland.[1]

[1] *Hansard*, xxviii. 63, 64.

In strict accordance with this cautious policy, Lord John himself introduced the Corporation Bill. The ground for this measure, which is still recollected as second only in importance to the Reform Act, had been prepared by a commission, appointed by the Government of Lord Grey, whose elaborate reports were only presented in the spring of 1835. It is impossible to give a detailed account of the abuses which the Corporation Bill remedied. It is sufficient to say that the government of the great towns of England was in the hands of a small, and in many cases dwindling, body of freemen, who were usually self-elected, and who frequently applied to their own uses both the property and privileges of the boroughs. It was the object of Lord John's Bill, which applied to 183 boroughs containing an aggregate population of 2,000,000 persons, to abolish all exclusive privileges, and to transfer the government from oligarchies to the people.

The conduct of this Bill, which, as it was ultimately passed, contained upwards of 140 clauses, devolved almost entirely on Lord John. With occasional assistance from the Attorney-General, the whole burden of debate fell on his shoulders. No leader could have shown himself more competent to steer a difficult and complicated measure through the House of Commons. Supported firmly by his party, he was able to carry the Bill through all its stages without material amendment: and, in the few cases in which important divisions took place, to defeat Sir Robert Peel by larger majorities than those which had destroyed the Conservative Administration.

The chief difficulties of the Government, however, did not lie in the House in which they could reckon on a majority. The Bill had still to pass through another ordeal; and it was certain that the attitude of the Lords was not likely to be friendly to a measure which it was no secret was disliked by the King. William IV. took no pains to conceal his disapproval of the Bill; and, in acknowledging Lord John's customary account of the debate on July 2,[1] wrote—

[1] It was on this night that Mr. O'Connell made a pointed attack on Lord Stanley, who on the previous evening had, in company with Sir James Graham,

Although his Majesty would in general rejoice at the progress of any essential measure through the House, it is impossible for him, without unworthily disguising his feelings, to avoid expressing his regret that some of the amendments proposed have met with so little attention from the House, especially as several were in his Majesty's opinion judicious and necessary, and in full accordance with the sentiments he had expressed to Viscount Melbourne. . . .

William IV. was not in the habit of concealing his opinions under a bushel. His views, which were probably known to Conservative statesmen, encouraged the Lords to introduce radical alterations into the measure.[1] Their effect may perhaps be gathered from the boast of Lord Ellenborough that the Corporation Bill had been converted into a full, consistent, and constitutional Conservative Reform. The anger which the conduct of the Lords created in the country arrested the tide of Conservative reaction which had previously been in progress. Even a moderate man like the present Lord Grey talked of 'the Lords being swept away like chaff.'[2] The reconstructed Bill was returned to the Lower House of Parliament on Friday, August 28. On the following Monday Lord John assembled his own friends at the Foreign Office, and explained to them the manner in which he proposed to deal with the Lords' amendments. On the evening of that day he repeated his decision in the House of Commons. He had never given stronger proof of his capacity as leader.

crossed the House and taken his seat for the first time on the Conservative benches, which he never afterwards left. Lord Stanley resented the attack with the warmth of a Hotspur; and Lord John wound up the discussion in a felicitous speech, which goes far to explain the terms of mutual affection which Lord Stanley and he maintained till the very end: 'It had given him great pain, as his noble friend well knew, that the difference of opinion had taken place between them which occurred last year. . . . His noble friend had stated that his opinions were not changed by his change of place. . . . No part in politics which his noble friend might take would ever induce him to believe that he acted from any other motive than his own sense of honour.'—*Hansard*, xxix. 203.

[1] These amendments *inter alia* introduced aldermen, elected for life, into every corporation; directed the election of common councillors from the ranks of the largest ratepayers; preserved the political and commercial privileges of Churchmen; confined the management of Church property to those members of the council who were members of the Church of England; and made town clerks irremovable during good behaviour.

[2] *Greville*, iii. 290.

Speaking with great firmness, but with studied moderation, he carefully detailed the few points on which he was prepared to give way, and the many amendments which he declined to concede. To his great credit, Sir Robert Peel, disregarding the views of his more intemperate followers in both Houses, recommended moderation. The Duke of Wellington adopted a similar course. The Peers, no longer able to resist, yielded the more important matters in dispute. Lord John, in his turn, made some slight concessions; and, through this moderate and temperate conduct, the measure was passed, and a collision between the two branches of the Legislature, which at one moment had seemed imminent, was avoided.

The King, who had regarded the agitation against the Lords with alarm, viewed the result with satisfaction.

Windsor Castle: September 3, 1835.

The King has received Lord John Russell's letter of yesterday, which is very satisfactory, as indeed have been all his reports of the proceedings of the House of Commons on the Municipal Corporations Bill since the return of it from the House of Lords, and his Majesty is very sensible of the disposition which the members of the House have (with the exception of a few whose support cannot be creditable or desirable upon any occasion) shown to avert the evils which would result from any serious collision with the House of Lords. His Majesty was assured by Sir Robert Peel when he resigned his office that his conduct in opposition would never be influenced by any desire to embarrass his Majesty's Government, and that he would support it so far as he could consistently with the principles he is bound to maintain: and his Majesty is convinced that Sir Robert Peel will be found ready on all occasions of public emergency to pursue that frank and honourable course which has tended so much to his credit at this critical period. His Majesty cannot pay this tribute to Sir Robert Peel without assuring Lord John Russell that he fully appreciates the good feeling and the spirit in which his Lordship has met the anxiety shown by Sir Robert Peel and his friends to obtain a general concurrence in the House of Commons.

(Signed) WILLIAM R.

So ended this important controversy. Unfortunately, the success which was thus achieved was marred by a

disappointing failure. Lord John, at the commencement of the session, had coupled Municipal Reform in England with the Regulation of Tithes in Ireland; and, if the English Bill had become law, the Irish Bill had experienced different treatment. The Irish measure was introduced under unsatisfactory circumstances. In reluctantly consenting to place at the disposal of Parliament his own interest in the dignities and benefices of the Irish Church, the King thought it necessary to write—

Upon this occasion as upon that of any and every communication which is connected with the Church Temporalities Bill, since the introduction of the resolutions attached to the measure, his Majesty considers it due to himself and consistency of opinion and feeling, to qualify his assent as arising from the circumstances under which he is placed, and not from the abandonment of such private feeling and opinion.[1]

The King's objections did not influence the Commons. The Bill rapidly passed through all its stages. In the Lords, however, it was divided into two halves. One portion of it, which regulated tithes, was passed; the other, which dealt with the surplus revenues of the Church, was thrown out.

The conduct of the Lords in bisecting the Tithe Bill made it plain that radical differences existed between the two parties in the State and the two branches of the Legislature. The Commons, like the Whigs, were agreed that no Tithe Bill would be satisfactory which did not contain an Appropriation Clause. The Lords, like the Tories, were determined that no measure containing such a clause should become law. And this difference was emphasised by the fate which almost simultaneously attended another measure. The Whig Ministers, towards the end of the session of 1835, decided on extending the principles and advantages of Municipal Reform to Irish municipalities. At the outset their decision was sharply censured by the King:—

His Majesty cannot but apprehend the greatest mischief from the introduction of such a Bill. . . . A Bill of this character . . . may

[1] The King to Lord J. Russell, June 25, 1835.

suit Mr. D. O'Connell or other agitators, but cannot tend to the advantage or tranquillity of Ireland.[1]

And again :—

It appears to his Majesty desirable [2] at this advanced season, and considering the extraordinary length of the session, to bring forward the Appropriation Bill without further delay.

The King's advice was not taken ; the session was protracted, while the Irish Municipal Bill was rapidly passed through the Commons. Its passage through that House did not ensure its success. It was thrown out by the Lords.

The session of 1835, therefore, was famous for one great success, with which Lord John had been directly connected, and for two failures. But, from a personal point of view, it was still more noteworthy for what Lord Ebrington, writing to Lord John, called 'the golden opinions you have won from all shades of our allies by your conduct.'

Lord John's protracted exertions had severely taxed his delicate organisation. He was exhausted with his long labours, and sought and obtained the King's permission to recruit his strength by seeking rest and fresh air at Endsleigh.[3] He set out from London in the second week of September, accompanied by his wife and her children. His eldest step-daughter (Mrs. Drummond), writes—

I believe it was in the autumn after Lord Russell's marriage to my mother that they took me with them for a tour in Devonshire. Even then (being between eight and nine years old) I had an indistinct, but real sense of the charm of [his] conversation. . . . On the journey, however, I recall only a ghost story, which I made him repeat over and over again ; so delightful was the terrible moment when, with deep voice and solemn countenance, he uttered the knight's rash declaration to the ghost :—

[1] The King to Lord J. Russell, August 14, 1835.

[2] The King to Lord J. Russell, August 13, 1835.

[3] Sir H. Taylor wrote to Lord John on September 4, 'His Majesty approves of your going into Devonshire at the end of next week, as he is well aware of the necessity of some rest after your active campaign.' The necessity was great. In the Plymouth address, which will be immediately mentioned, the subscribers express 'the most earnest wish that your health may be speedily re-established.'

Agnes, Agnes, I am thine,
Agnes, Agnes, thou art mine,
Body and soul for ever !

A more real terror to me while travelling was the behaviour of the people in the towns and villages we passed through. They greeted the champion of Reform with shouts of joy, and at Ilfracombe they came out to meet us, took the horses out, and dragged the carriage into the town.

After travelling through the wild scenery of Northern Devonshire, the Russells turned south, and came to Endsleigh. Fresh air soon restored Lord John's health; and he probably let out the secret of his own rapid recovery in a letter (on September 28) to Lord Melbourne—

I am very sorry to hear that you have not been well since the session ended. I am afraid that you do not take exercise enough, or eat and drink more than enough. One of the two may do, but not both together. I have been quite set up by leaving London, and having only a moderate quantity of business with sufficient of good air.

While Lord John was shooting his father's partridges, and resting from his labours, a different man was otherwise occupied. Mr. O'Connell, imitating the example of Lord Brougham in 1834, was travelling through Scotland, addressing monster meetings, and demanding the abolition of the House of Lords. After his tour in Scotland, he returned to Ireland, left his name at the Castle, and was formally invited to dinner by the Viceroy. The alarm with which the King had watched the agitator's progress was increased by observing that such an attention was paid to him. Mr. O'Connell's language—so his Majesty declared—'ought to exclude him from the society of gentlemen;' and Lord Melbourne was of opinion—

that nothing but the ill success of the former experiment prevents O'Connell's progress and speeches from having the same result as was produced by Brougham's tour last year. It seems to me easy to get through the sitting of Parliament. The vacation is the trying time.

The brunt of the King's displeasure fell upon Lord John;

through whom, as Home Secretary, the Lord Lieutenant's explanations flowed to the Crown. Lord Mulgrave declared that he had made a point of inviting to dinner every peer and member of Parliament who called on him; that Mr. O'Connell had called, and had been invited accordingly; and that, if he had sinned, he had sinned in good company, for Lord John himself had committed the same offence during the session. Lord John forwarded Lord Mulgrave's letter to the King, and added [1]—

Nor would it be fair to Lord Mulgrave if I withheld my opinion that his explanation is satisfactory. So long as Mr. O'Connell could be kept in check by the power of a Coercion Act, it was my opinion, as it was that of Lord Grey and Lord Melbourne, that we should be able to prevent any serious mischief from his agitation in favour of a repeal of the Union. But, when the opposition of Lord Wellesley in Ireland, and of Lord Althorp and four other members of the Cabinet at home, made that mode of government utterly impossible, I felt obliged to look out for some other plan; and, with the best reflection that I am able to give to the question, it appears to me that a cautious and guarded conduct, neither placing in Mr. O'Connell a confidence he would probably abuse, nor driving him to angry desperation by marked exclusion . . . will afford the best chance of preserving the ignorant and inflammatory population of Ireland from disaffection and disturbance. It is, I believe, a circumstance quite new in the history of this country that there should exist a man of great talents, popular eloquence, and great influence, who neither keeps within the bounds of Parliamentary warfare like Lord Chatham and Mr. Fox, and who is yet such a master of law that he can do ten times more mischief than Lord Edward Fitzgerald and Mr. Emmet without incurring any legal penalty. For the present he seems to have dropped Repeal, which is his most dangerous weapon; and such is the state of Ireland that every month of tranquillity gained gives a fairer hope for the progress of wealth, education, and civilisation.

The King's alarm was not entirely allayed by Lord John's explanation; but his confidence was increased by the closer knowledge, which he was gradually acquiring, of Lord John's character and opinions. He had hitherto regarded him as a dangerous innovator; the autumn of 1835 was to

[1] Lord John to Sir H. Taylor, October 21, 1835.

show him that Lord John's desire for Reform was prompted by a wish to improve and preserve the constitution which the King had perhaps feared that he was about to destroy. Much, for instance, as Lord John had suffered from the conduct of the Lords, he had no intention of lending himself to an attack upon them. He wrote to Lord Melbourne on the 7th of October—

> The Pitt party has been weakened, not strengthened, by making so many dull country gentlemen duller peers. . . . Two or three now and then may be useful, but I should regret any large creation. The best stuff would be Liberal Irishmen. The Orange peers are so harmonious, and Duncannon is not an orator.

Twice during the recess he had an opportunity of stating these views in public. On his arrival in Devonshire, some of his old constituents—the inhabitants of Plymouth and the neighbourhood—waited on him to thank him for his great and protracted exertions, and for the attachment which he had shown to the cause of civil and religious liberty. In his reply Lord John referred in severe language to the conduct of the Lords :—

> The same party which prompted and led this resistance have been opposed to every Liberal measure which has been proposed for the last seven years ; and upon all the most important of those measures their resistance has ended in a confession that the struggle was hopeless, and that, although darkness was still to be desired, light was no longer to be excluded.

But he added—

> Fortified, therefore, by past victories, relying firmly on future progress, I earnestly recommend you to look for the triumph of further measures of Reform rather to the effect of public opinion, enlightened and matured by knowledge and discussion, than to organic changes which cannot be proposed without causing division, nor carried without risk of convulsion. . . . For my own part . . . to the great landmarks of our liberties I must steadily adhere ; . . . to the constitution of this country in all its branches I stand pledged by feeling, by opinion, and by duty.

And at a great dinner at Bristol, on the 10th of November, where the Reformers of that city presented him with some silver

candelabra 'raised by subscriptions of sixpence each, as a testimony of their high admiration and grateful sense of his public conduct and political consistency,' he again used scrupulously moderate language.[1]

These two speeches won him marked approval. Lord Grey[2] wrote on November 6—

I approve very much of your answer to the Plymouth address; thinking the Government bound by every consideration of duty to oppose a firm and decided resistance to Mr. O'Connell's new scheme for what some call reforming, but what he fairly acknowledges and avows to mean overturning, the House of Lords.

While his father, who was in Scotland recovering from the effects of a paralytic seizure, wrote more warmly—

I cannot resist speaking of the admiration with which I read your answer to the addresses at Endsleigh. It is quite perfect.

The Bristol speech won equal approval from a more Conservative critic. Sir Herbert Taylor wrote, by the King's commands, on November 12—

The King noticed with much satisfaction in the report of the proceedings the tone of the speech which you made in reply to the address of the inhabitants who presented you with a piece of plate, and the spirit of your remarks.

Lord John stayed at Bowood for the Bristol meeting. He returned thence to London, where the Cabinet was reassembling. Business of importance was awaiting the Ministers. They had to determine, in the first place, on the legislation of the ensuing session; and they had, in the next place, to decide what to do with the Chancellorship. Lord Melbourne, unwilling to confer office on Lord Brougham, had placed the great seal in commission. But the Administration

[1] The substance of the Bristol speech was published in a pamphlet (London, 1835). I have not attempted to enumerate all the occasions on which Lord John received testimonials of this character. One of them, in 1832, may be recollected as the subject of one of H.B.'s caricatures, 'Ministers ~~and~~ in their Cups.'

[2] Lord Grey—so Lord Ebrington wrote to Lord John on September 26—'is sadly low, and, I must add, sadly wrong, about politics. The O'Connell-phobia stronger than ever, and the notion of any change in the constitution of the House of Lords treated as an utter overturn of the Monarchy, though he was forced to admit that they had done a good deal to deserve it.'

lost no time in announcing that the arrangement was provisional, and that it was intended to separate the judicial and political functions of the Chancellor. Very early in the recess Lord John drew up a memorandum, which he sent to the Prime Minister, in which he advocated the appointment of a permanent judge in equity. In the following month Lord Melbourne and Lord John, who were in almost daily communication with one another on the subject, agreed that legislation should be attempted in the ensuing session, and that in the meanwhile Sir C. Pepys, the Master of the Rolls, should be advanced to the Chancellorship and a peerage. But the promotion involved a new difficulty. Two men, Lord Brougham, and Sir J. Campbell, the Attorney-General, were certain to aspire to the office thus vacated; and, so far as Lord Brougham [1] was concerned, it was very doubtful whether the King would assent to his promotion; while Sir John Campbell's training did not qualify him to preside in an equity court. Lord John wrote from Woburn on the 12th of December—

> With respect to the Mastership of the Rolls, I shall be content to see it given to Brougham, Bickersteth, or Campbell. I am doubtful about the two first.

And Lord Melbourne replied on the 14th—

> I have been thinking much about the great seal, and I feel great doubts whether I could conscientiously recommend the King to place Brougham at the Rolls. . . . If the King were to say to me, 'After the manner he has acted, can you advise me to place him in a

[1] In September 1835 Lord John decided on re-constituting an old commission to inquire into educational endowments, and on offering Lord Brougham, whose previous career marked him out for the post, the chairmanship of the commission. The King strongly objected to Lord Brougham's employment even in this capacity, and Lord John wrote to Lord Melbourne on September 30 begging him to overcome the King's objection. 'If Brougham is rejected after having consulted his friends, we shall have "war to the knife" from him, and, according to an old joke of Dudley's, Mr. Brougham's Monarchy Abolition Bill read a first time.' The King gave way very reluctantly, saying, 'he does not know what Mr. Brougham may do in any situation;' and Lord Melbourne added the next day, October 1, 'I have reason to think that the letter to you with respect to the appointment to the head of the Charity Commission was written, not with a view of persisting in the objection, but to let you know what were the feelings entertained "with respect to this individual."'

high judicial office from which, however he may act, or whatever extravagance he may commit, I cannot remove him?' I know not what I should be able to answer. My opinion is to make Pepys Chancellor, and Bickersteth Master of the Rolls, with or without a peerage; but I think the former. . . . To Campbell's complaints I should say that we were determined to try equity lawyers in equity courts. No common lawyer has recently given satisfaction.

I was not at all disposed [replied Lord John on the same day] to urge pertinaciously what I yet think a fair claim for Brougham. In your place, I could venture to recommend him to the King. But I cannot fairly ask you to be responsible for a man in whose soundness of mind and integrity of conduct you have so little confidence. The appointment of Bickersteth would have the advantage that the courts of equity would be as well filled as the corruption of what is called equity would permit.[1]

These arrangements were concluded in the first week of January; and Lord John, who, since his return from Devonshire, had paid flying visits to Brighton, Holkham, and Woburn, settled in London to prepare for the coming session. Unfortunately for him he was immediately afterwards laid up with fever; and, though the attack proved a very mild one, he was far from recovered when Parliament opened in the beginning of February. His father wrote to him imploring him not to do the honours of the dinner which the leader of the House of Commons always gives at the commencement of the session.

I trust you will reconsider it. You will be risking a collapse, *et à quoi bon*? The Chancellor of the Exchequer can sit at the head of the table, and . . . read the King's speech, just as well as you can.

[1] Lord John had not a high opinion of equity judges. In the memorandum referred to in the text as addressed to Lord Melbourne in October, he wrote, 'Two of the fittest men of our time to preside in an equity court (Lord Eldon and Sir John Leach) had yet such faults that, according to the epigram, with one you never had the oyer, with the other never the terminer.'

Lord John did not cease to regret Lord Melbourne's refusal to appoint Lord Brougham. Nearly two years afterwards, on September 12, 1837, he wrote to Lord Melbourne: 'I have a letter from the Chancellor, very full and satisfactory. He says truly enough that Langdale will not be of much use to him. I always regret that office was not given to Brougham. It would have been better for the suitors and for the public.'

Think how very important it is that you should keep yourself quite well, and in health and strength, to undertake all that will be required of you in the ensuing campaign.

If Lord John had cared much for anonymous abuse, a series of letters, which was just appearing in the 'Times,' might have retarded his recovery. Mr. Disraeli wrote the first of the Runnymede Letters on January 16, 1836. The letter to Lord John Russell is dated January 30. Their author's subsequent career has given a permanent interest to these scurrilous productions; and though, in the form in which they are read to-day, they are a little less offensive than when they first appeared, the reader, accustomed to the careful manner in which the 'Times' is now edited, is surprised that that paper should have stooped to insert them. In these letters Mr. Disraeli exhausted his powers of venom in attacking Lord John Russell. In the opening letter the seals of the principal office of the State are entrusted to an individual who, on the principle that good vinegar is the corruption of bad wine, has been metamorphosed from an incapable author into an eminent politician. In the letter of February 2, the three Secretaries of State are described as 'one odious, another contemptible, the third [Lord John] both.' And in the letter of January 30 Lord John is thus addressed :—

You were born with a strong ambition and a feeble intellect. . . . Your ambition persuaded you that you were a great poet; your intellect in consequence produced the feeblest tragedy in our language. . . . Your ambition sought from prose fiction the fame which had been denied to your lyre; and your intellect in consequence produced the feeblest romance in our literature. Not deterred by the unhappy catastrophe of the fair maid of Arrouca, . . . your ambition sought consolation in the notoriety of political literature, and your intellect in due time produced the feeblest political essay on record. . . . Your ambition resolved on rivalling the fame of Hume and Gibbon. Your 'Memoirs of the Affairs of Europe,' published with pompous parade in successive quarto volumes, retailed in frigid sentences a feeble compilation from the gossip of those pocket tomes of small talk which abound in French literature. . . . This luckless production closed your literary career; you flung down your futile pen in incapable despair; and, your feeble intellect having failed in literature, your

strong ambition took refuge in politics. . . . Your friends, I speak of the circle in which you lived, . . always treated you with a species of contempt. . . . Lord Grey, only five years ago, would not even condescend to offer you a seat in the Cabinet, and affected to state that, in according you a respectable office, he had been as much influenced by the state of your finances as of your capacity. . . . A finer observer of human nature than that forlorn statesman might have recognised—at this crisis in a noble with an historic name and no fortune, a vast ambition and a balked career, and soured, not to say malignant, from disappointment, some prime materials for the lead of a revolutionary faction. These materials have worked well. . . . A miniature Mokanna, you are now exhaling upon the constitution of your country which you once eulogised . . . all this long-hoarded venom and all those distempered humours that have for years accumulated in your petty heart and tainted the current of your mortified life. Your aim is to reduce everything to your own mean level—to degrade everything to your malignant standard. . . . I think it is Macrobius who tells a story of a young Greek, who, having heard much of the wealth and wisdom of Egypt, determined on visiting that celebrated land. When he beheld the pyramids of Memphis and the gates of Thebes, he exclaimed, 'Oh, wonderful men, what must be your Gods!' . . . . But what was his mingled astonishment and disgust when he found a nation prostrate before the most contemptible and the most odious of created beings! The Gods of Egypt are the Ministers of England. . . . But, my Lord, how thunderstruck must be our visitor when he is told to recognise a Secretary of State in an infinitely small scarabeus; yes, my Lord, when he learns that you are the leader of the English House of Commons, our traveller may begin to comprehend how the Egyptians worshipped—AN INSECT.

Mr. Disraeli's strictures were sooner or later certain to be answered by Mr. Disraeli himself. And accordingly eight years after the Runnymede Letters Mr. Disraeli wrote—

The interval that elapsed between 1835 and 1837 proved that there was all this time in the Whig array one entirely competent to the office of leading a great party. . . . Lord John Russell has that degree of imagination, which, though evinced rather in sentiment than expression, still enables him to generalise from the details of his reading and experience, and to take those comprehensive views which, however easily depreciated by ordinary men in an age of routine, are indispensable to a statesman in the conjunctures in which we live. He understands, therefore, his position; and he has the moral intre-

pidity which prompts him on to dare that which his intellect assures him is politic. He is consequently, at the same time, sagacious and bold in council. As an administrator, he is prompt and indefatigable. He is not a natural orator, and labours under physical difficulties which even a Demosthenic impulse could scarcely overcome. But he is experienced in debate, quick in reply, fertile in resource, takes large views, and frequently compensates for a dry and hesitating manner by the expression of those noble truths that flash across the fancy, and rise spontaneously to the lip, of men of poetic temperament when addressing popular assemblies. If we add to this a private life of dignified repute, the accidents of his birth and rank, which never can be severed from the man—the scion of a great historic family, and born, as it were, to the hereditary service of the State—it is difficult to ascertain at what period, or under what circumstances, the Whig party have ever possessed, or could obtain, a more efficient leader.[1]

While 'Runnymede's' abuse was still wet from the printing-press, and Lord John was still weak from the effects of his recent illness, the session of 1836 began. A speech from the throne had rarely announced the preparation of more important measures of Reform. Parliament was invited to direct its 'early attention to the ecclesiastical establishment with the intention of rendering it more efficient;' to relieve the tithe system from the fluctuations and objections to which it has hitherto been subject; to remedy 'any grievances which affect those who dissent from the doctrines or discipline of the Established Church;' to effect a just settlement of tithes in Ireland; to deal with municipal corporations in that country, 'upon the same principles as those of the Acts which have already been passed for England and Scotland;' to approach the question of poor relief in Ireland 'with the caution due to its importance and difficulty,' but 'with the experience of the salutary effect produced by the English poor law;' and to consider whether better provisions may not be made for the administration of justice, 'more especially in the Court of Chancery.'

The Government could not have expected to carry so many measures in a single year; and the session of 1836

[1] *Coningsby*, book v. ch. iv.

is undoubtedly remembered for its failures as well as for its successes. Yet, though the Lords displayed an unceasing determination to thwart the projects of the Administration, much useful work was accomplished. And the measures which were carried were precisely those which were specially entrusted to Lord John Russell's management, and which had been framed under his superintendence.

At the close of the session of 1835 the Cabinet appointed committees to 'consider the whole case of the Dissenters,' and the English tithe system. Lord John served on both committees, and was the guiding spirit of each of them. Tithes and their unfairness were no new subject to him. His old constituents in Devonshire felt strongly on the matter, and in 1834 presented a petition to the House of Commons praying that tithes should be commuted for a money payment equal to one tenth of the rent. In speaking on this petition, which was presented by Lord Ebrington, Lord John had the courage to point out that he differed from the petitioners. Tithe, he explained, was not one-tenth of the rent, but one-tenth of the produce; and, on the assumption that the produce was equivalent to three rents, one-tenth of the rent would be only equivalent to one-thirtieth of the produce. But though he dissented from the petitioners' conclusion, he took occasion to say that he considered tithes the institution of a barbarous age—a remark which subjected him to the retort from Mr. O'Connell that tithes had been introduced by the English into Ireland, so that the English were the barbarous bestowers of tithes on that country.[1] Thus, even if Sir Robert Peel had not proposed to deal with the subject, Lord John could hardly have avoided legislation upon it.

The Bill, which he brought forward at the commencement of the session of 1836, passed without material amendment and proved a permanent settlement of a difficult question. Instead, however, of recording a dull Parliamentary discussion, it will probably be simplest to insert Lord John's own account of the measure and of his reasons for introducing it. The unsettled state of the tithe question, he wrote—

[1] *Hansard*, xi. 1038–1047.

was deeply injurious to the interests of agriculture and to those of the Church. In many instances where waste lands might have been brought into cultivation, or the produce of cultivated lands and the supply of food to the people largely augmented, the right of the Church to appropriate a tenth of the produce without regard to the expense of the improvement was a positive bar to cultivation. In many other instances, the attempts of the farmers to abate the rights of the Church, and to force the clergymen to be content with a twentieth part of the produce, or even less, instead of the legal tenth, had been the source of wrangling and ill-will between the farmers and the clergymen, to the destruction of Christian charity, and of the harmony that ought to prevail between the pastor and his flock. Pitt had attempted in vain to frame a complete measure on this subject. Peel had endeavoured to remedy the notorious evils by a voluntary commutation; but a commutation short of compulsory would have left many of the worst cases untouched—cases in which the Church had insisted unwisely upon its full rights, or a combination of farmers had determined to vex and worry a clergyman of easy disposition, till they reduced him to penury by their obstinacy and injustice. All the evils of the tithe system were the subject of fair compromise and permanent settlement by the Act of 1836. Three commissioners, two of whom were appointed by the Crown and one by the Archbishop of Canterbury, were empowered, after examination, to proceed by certain fixed rules to a final adjudication. In about seven years this process was completed, and a work from which Pitt had shrunk was accomplished. The progress of agriculture was freed from vexatious impediments, and the clergy were spared the unseemly contentions which had fostered ill-will and disturbed social relations.[1]

Equally, or almost equally, complete was another measure carried in the same session. From the middle of the eighteenth century, when the Marriage Act was passed, to the year 1836 when it was reformed by Lord John Russell's efforts, marriage was a religious ceremony, which, except in the case of the Quaker or of the Jew, could only legally be performed by a clergyman of the Church of England. This law naturally produced great irritation among those who dissented from the doctrines of the Church; and, in 1834, Lord John, on the part of the Whig Government, introduced a measure for the

[1] *Recollections and Suggestions*, p. 141.

purpose of amending it. He proposed that Dissenters should be married in their own chapels, which were to be licensed; but that the banns should be asked in the parish church, and the register forwarded to the diocesan registrar. The proposal created no enthusiasm among the Dissenters, and the Bill was dropped. In the following year Sir Robert Peel, during his brief administration, proposed that marriage with Dissenters should be a civil contract, and not a religious ceremony. But this proposal also failed to excite any enthusiasm among Nonconformists. They desired as much as Churchmen that their marriages should be accompanied with religious ceremony; and the vast majority of them were unwilling that they should be deprived of the sanction which religion gave, or appeared to give, to these contracts.

Under these circumstances Sir Robert Peel's Bill was suffered to fall with his Administration. But Sir R. Peel's failure, as well as the abandonment of his own measure in the previous year, had convinced Lord John that no solution of the question could be found until a general civil registration was substituted for the ecclesiastical registers which alone existed up to that time. As early as March 1834, indeed, he had said that the House would never see the end of the evils until they established a system of national registration; later on in that year he had declared that there was no sacrifice which the country ought not to make in order to get rid of the present imperfect system of registration. On the introduction of Sir Robert Peel's Bill he at once expressed his doubt whether any measure would succeed which did not establish a national registry; and after acceding to office, in declining to proceed with the Bill, he expressed his opinion that the first measure that ought to be adopted, with a view both to the Dissenters and the inhabitants of the country at large, is one to establish a civil registration of births, marriages, and deaths.'[1] In accordance with these reiterated opinions he introduced two measures at the commencement of 1836, one establishing a national registry and the other providing for Dissenters' marriages, in the presence of the registrar, in their own chapels.

[1] *Hansard*, xxii. 400, xxiii. 950, xxvi. 1092, xxix. 12.

The conduct of these Bills fell almost exclusively on Lord John. One of them, the Registration Bill, involved only slight discussion. The Marriage Bill did not escape without serious amendment. In the Bill, as it was originally introduced, it was Lord John's object to assimilate as far as possible the marriage in the chapel to the marriage in the church; and in each case he accordingly required that the same notice should be given to the registrar. Peer and prelate revolted against a provision which deprived the ceremony of asking banns of any real significance, and the Bill was accordingly amended. Lord John accepted the amendment which he disliked for the sake of securing the passage of his Bill. But his own views were enlarged and strengthened by the experience of a long lifetime, and he lived to record his opinion that—

> It will be matter for consideration whether the future law, instead of recognising the marriage registers of every Christian communion and every Jewish synagogue, should not be founded on the same principle as the laws of France and Italy, constituting civil marriages the only bond recognised by the State, and leaving to the parties concerned to add any religious ceremony or ceremonies they may think proper.

These three great measures, the Tithe Commutation Act, the Registration Act, and the Marriage Act, would have reflected credit on any Government or on any Minister. In the same year in which the Marriage Act was passed, another grievance under which Nonconformists lay was partly removed by the establishment of a new University at London with powers to grant degrees.[1] Thenceforward, if religious tests still barred the way to distinction at Oxford and Cam-

[1] Lord John wished to go much further. Lord Melbourne wrote to him on December 15, 1836: 'Rice tells me that you want a Bill for the admission of Dissenters to the Universities. Is this absolutely necessary? Is not the charter of the new London University enough for the present? If it is not absolutely necessary I am sure that it is not prudent to stir this question. There is none upon which prejudice is stronger or more violent. Many of our own friends are in their hearts against it. It is also a very difficult question, and one of which it is almost impossible to find a satisfactory solution. The Universities are so framed upon the principle of their students being members of the Church of England that Dissenters can hardly be admitted without a complete change of their forms.'

bridge, men of every tone of thought were able to graduate in London.

While Lord John was thus endeavouring to satisfy the just demands of the Dissenters, he did not ignore the claims of the Church. In 1836, carrying out the recommendation of a commission which Sir Robert Peel had instituted and which Lord Melbourne had continued, he introduced three Bills—one equalising the Bishops' incomes, combining some old sees and constituting some new ones; another applying the surplus income of capitular establishments to the general purposes of the Church; and a third discouraging pluralities. The first of these measures was passed in 1836; the two others became law in 1838 and 1839. In carrying them, Lord John might fairly claim that, if he had done more to satisfy Dissent than any statesman since the days of Nottingham, he had done more to strengthen the Church than any Minister since the days of Godolphin.

Well might Lord Western write to Lord John on the 20th of August—

> I congratulate you on the termination of this most arduous session. I think you have had more difficult cards to play than ever fell into the hands of any leader of the House of Commons, and I do sincerely think that you have done yourself immortal honour in the struggle. I have experienced *great satisfaction* in contemplating the course you have taken upon each successive *very* difficult question that has arisen, and carried through with so much discretion, temper, and ability.

But, though an English statesman or an English nobleman might contemplate the session of 1836 with satisfaction, no Irish politician could regard it with the same feelings. For it was unfortunately true that, if the Ministers had experienced a great success in carrying their English measures, their Irish measures had met with a different reception. And, while from an English standpoint the statutes of 1836 could be accepted with pleasure, from an Irish standpoint the statutes of 1836 were not worth the paper they were printed on.

Lord John was, of course, the member of the Government directly responsible for Irish administration. In 1835

the Lord Lieutenant virtually acted under the Home Office, and the Chief Secretary was essentially Secretary to the Viceroy. The Home Office was the pivot on which Irish policy and Irish administration continually turned; and both on questions of policy and questions of administration Lord John was in favour of a change of system. The lessons which he had learned during his short visit to Ireland in 1833 had not been lost on him; and, while he was eager to do justice to religion by curtailing some of the surplus revenue of the Church of the minority, he was equally anxious to do justice to Protestant and Catholic, landlord and tenant, by enforcing the ordinary law without resorting to exceptional measures of coercion.

The state of Ireland in 1835 was sufficiently anomalous. Roman Catholic Emancipation had been carried six years before. But, with the exception of Mr. O'Loghlen's appointment in the previous autumn, no Roman Catholic had ever been placed in a prominent office. From the Castle to the constabulary all officials were tinged with Orangeism. It was the custom to hoist the royal standard at the Castle not only to celebrate great days of public rejoicing like the birthday of the King or Queen, but also days of 'Orange' triumph such as the battles of the Boyne and of Aghrim.[1] Politicians in England watched with alarm the progress of the formidable association over which Mr. O'Connell presided. Politicians in Ireland regarded the Orange lodges as branches of a more formidable society. At the head of one association was Mr. O'Connell, Member of Parliament and barrister at law; at the head of the other was the Duke of Cumberland, the King's brother.

The first thing, then, to do to satisfy Irishmen was to show them that the Castle was no longer affected by a distinctly 'Orange' policy. Much was done in this direction by the selection of Lord Mulgrave and by his conduct as Viceroy. But Lord Mulgrave saw from the first that a still greater change was required, and that it would be necessary to remove the Under Secretary. He endeavoured to secure a colonial appointment for him: he finally obtained for him the post of

[1] Letter from Lord Mulgrave to Lord J. Russell.

Serjeant-at-Arms in the House of Commons; and he chose as Sir W. Gosset's successor, Mr. Drummond, an Engineer officer, whose views were as broad as his capacity was large, and who is still recollected as the only official who has filled the post of Under Secretary and given complete satisfaction to the Irish people.[1]

Mr. Drummond's appointment was only one symptom of a change of system. Up to 1835 troops had been sent in aid of any tithe-owner who apprehended disturbances in collecting his tithes. In 1835, Lord John expressed his formal concurrence with the views of the Irish law officers that 'the assistance of the military and police ought to be reserved for those cases where the attempt to collect tithe has produced riot or breach of the peace.' He went on to say that where soldiers had been sent in England in aid of the civil power, he had 'specially warned the Lord Lieutenant and the Commander-in-Chief not to allow the troops to be brought within sight of the people unless actual rioting took place.' About the same time other steps, with Lord John's approval, of equal significance were taken by Lord Mulgrave: (1) Roman Catholics were no longer excluded from the lists from which the sheriffs were chosen; (2) a due proportion of Roman Catholics were selected among the solicitors appointed to conduct local prosecutions; and (3) pronounced Orangemen were removed from the constabulary.

The last of these three measures was exceptionally necessary. Nothing in Ireland was more deplorable than the organisation and activity of the Orange lodges. There were said to be 50,000 Orangemen in London, 350,000 in the

[1] Mr. Drummond, who, subsequent to his appointment, married the young lady who was intended to carry the umbrella at Lord John's wedding, is chiefly recollected for his famous apophthegm, 'Property has its duties as well as its rights.' How necessary such a saying was in Ireland may perhaps be seen from the following extract from a letter written in October 1835 by Lord Duncannon to Lord John: 'The county of Carlow is perhaps in the worst state in this part of Ireland. The contested election and an Orange gentry have evoked an excitement quite unparalleled. This has not been improved by Lord—— [I suppress the name] having turned off his property to-day 63 families, about 300 souls, on the single ground that they are Catholics. They had all paid their rent and were good tenants, but had voted for Vigors and Raphael.'

United Kingdom, and 12,000 in Canada.[1] Still more alarming was the circumstance that lodges had been instituted in thirty or forty regiments on the authority of warrants from the Grand Lodge. At the close of the session of 1835, Mr. Hume had drawn attention to the fact, and had asked the House of Commons to condemn it. The King, acquainted beforehand with the motion, declared that he had no doubt that it would be found that Mr. Hume had discovered a mare's nest.[2] The debate did not fulfil the King's expectations. It was shown clearly that lodges had been formed in the army under warrants signed by the Duke of Cumberland. All that the Duke or his friends could allege in excuse was that warrants, signed by the Duke in blank, had been filled up by the persons to whom they had been entrusted in a manner which the Duke himself had not contemplated.

Under these circumstances it became impossible to deny the existence of lodges in regiments, and strict orders were issued to try by court martial any officer or soldier who belonged to an Orange lodge. The King, indeed, in assenting to this course, took occasion to condemn other societies which he perhaps thought would not be equally disliked by his Ministers. He wrote on the 7th of August that—

> He highly disapproves of all similar societies, whether Protestant or Catholic, including, of course, political and trades unions, and he sincerely wishes *all* could be put down by the strong arm of the law.

For the moment the matter dropped. In the recess Mr. Hume continued to urge Lord John to take further steps for the dissolution of Orange clubs, and at the commencement of the session of 1836 moved an address to the Crown for the removal of every functionary, civil or military, who attended the meeting of any Orange lodge or of any other political club. Lord John, rising immediately after the motion had been seconded, proposed an amendment praying

[1] Sir R. Blennerhasset in *The Reign of Victoria*, i. 535. Sir R. Blennerhasset thinks that historians have not paid sufficient attention to this remarkable organisation.

[2] The King to Lord J. Russell, July 18, 1835.

the King to take such measures as he might deem advisable for the effectual discouragement of Orange lodges and of all political societies. Perhaps no speech in the House of Commons before or since has ever produced a more remarkable effect than that which Lord John then made. The leading Orangemen themselves, though they desired to exclude from the amendment any express allusion to their own organisation by name, yielded at once to the temper of the leader of the House. Lord Stanley congratulated his noble friend on the triumph he had obtained by the mild, quiet, prudent, and statesmanlike tone he had assumed on the occasion. Mr. Greville declared that Lord John had immortalised himself. His

> speech, far surpassing his usual form, dignified, temperate, and judicious . . . drew tears from the Orangemen, enthusiastic approbation from Stanley, a colder approval from Peel, and the universal assent of the House. . . . In accomplishing this by moderate and healing counsels, by a conciliatory tone and manner, Lord John deserves the name of a statesman. His speech is worth a thousand flowery harangues which have elicited the shouts of audiences or the admiration of readers, and he has probably conferred a great and permanent benefit upon the country.

Whilst the King, who had now learned to regard his Minister in a very different light from that in which he looked upon him in 1835, highly approved—

> the very judicious course adopted by Lord John Russell. His Majesty does not think that under all the circumstances which had led to the agitation of the question, the words 'Orange lodge' could reasonably have been excluded from the amendment, and his Majesty rejoices that the amendment was carried without a division.

Thus, thanks to Lord John, a great step was taken in 1836 to reconcile Ireland. In the same session the House of Lords and the Tory party did much to widen the breach between it and England. The question of appropriation, which had been thrust into prominence in 1834, was now connected by the rejection of the Irish Municipal Bill with the question of local self-government. Irish politicians and Irish agitators were beginning to see that the second subject was

of even greater importance than the first. The Ministers, however, could not yet make up their minds to sacrifice the measure on which they had come into office, and decided on re-introducing both the Tithe and the Corporation Bills. The Lords, under Lord Lyndhurst's guidance, showed little respect for either measure. The Tithe Bill was reconstructed. The Municipal Bill was 'returned with the title altered, with the preamble changed;' out 'of 140 clauses [to quote Lord John's account of the matter] 106 have been in substance omitted, 18 other clauses have been introduced, and of the whole purport and intention of the original Bill little is to be found in the Bill which is now come down to us.'[1]

Lord John had patiently endured the conduct of the Lords in the previous session. He had resisted the appeals which had been made to him to take up the question of Peerage Reform, and had recommended a policy of calm expectation. But the attitude of the Peers in 1836 changed his opinion, and he drew up the following paper. It is not too much to say that, if the course recommended had been adopted, the position which the Melbourne Administration fills in history would have been materially altered.

June 5, 1836.

I beg to call the attention of the Cabinet to the position in which the present conduct of the House of Lords may place the Ministry and the country. It is evident that a majority of that House are combined, not to stop or alter a particular measure, but to stop or alter all measures which may not be agreeable to the most powerful, or, in other words, the most violent, among their own body. Both the Tories and the Radicals have the advantage of a definite course with respect to this state of things. The Tories praise the wisdom of the Lords, and wish to maintain their power undiminished. The Radicals complain of a mischievous obstacle to good government, and propose an elective House of Lords. The Ministers stand in the position of confessing the evil and not consenting to the remedy. The influence of public opinion is, indeed, to be looked to as some check to the House of Lords; but, on Irish questions, it is a very imperfect one. It is certainly possible to wait till the beginning of next session before any definite course is taken. But I own it appears

[1] *Hansard*, xxxiv. 218.

to me better to take every opportunity of increasing the strength of the Liberal party in the House of Lords, than to begin a struggle against a majority such as that which the Tory Peers now possess. It is possible, nay probable, that, if the Tories could see a steady and gradual creation of peers to meet this obstinate resistance, they would be disposed to yield. Before the passing of the Reform Bill they were coerced by [the threat of] a large creation and by that alone. It appears to me, therefore, that this opportunity should be taken for the creation of eight, ten, or twelve peers, and that the Ministry be prepared to advise a similar creation whenever it is *provoked.*

In reference to this paper Lord John sent the following note to the Prime Minister:—

Dear Melbourne,—I think, if you are not of the opinion stated in the paper I send you, it will be better not to send it round. One day or other we shall all come to one mind upon it, and, till we do, it is well not to have my propositions debated. But I beg you to consider it well. . . . —Yours,

J. R.

Lord Melbourne replied on the same evening—

South Street: June 5, 1836.

My dear John,—I have kept your letter in order to give it a little consideration. It is a very serious step: and, I have no doubt, if taken, will lead to the resignation of the Government, and to attempts to form another. What may be the consequences of this struggle it is impossible to foresee, and I own that at present I am loth to be the immediate and proximate cause of bringing it on. . . .—Yours faithfully,

MELBOURNE.

Lord Melbourne's reluctance to force on a crisis prevailed. No peers were created till the following year, and Lord Lyndhurst and his followers were not restrained in the almost undisguised effort which they made to check and thwart the policy of the Administration. Those persons, who think that the conduct of the Lords and the submission of the Commons were among the most unfortunate features of the Melbourne Administration, will regret that the suggestion which Lord John made to the Prime Minister was not adopted. But at the same time those who are best acquainted with the inner political history of 1835 and 1836 will be disposed to make large allowance for Lord Melbourne.

It was the Prime Minister's misfortune that, while he was engaged in carrying large and comprehensive measures of public policy, he was constantly distracted and opposed by the presence of petty questions and private jealousies. The claims of rival lawyers, and the objections which the sovereign entertained to particular individuals, gave the Ministers more trouble and anxiety than the differences between Lords and Commons or the suppression of Orange lodges.

In 1836 the King entertained an extraordinary dislike of Lord Glenelg. His treatment of that Minister in 1835 has been already mentioned. In June 1836, almost on the day on which Lord John was proposing the creation of a fresh batch of peers, William IV. was informing Lord Melbourne that he had refused his assent to a despatch which Lord Glenelg had submitted to him, and that he never would—

assent to any despatch which shall countenance the possibility of making a change in the manner of constituting the Councils in any of the colonies.[1]

Lord Glenelg would probably have best consulted his own dignity if he had at once retired from a situation in which his advice was not acted on. Instead of doing so he remained in office. One of the consequences will be best told in Lord Melbourne's own words.

South Street: August 26, 1836.

My dear John,—. . . . Affairs wear a very awkward aspect at Windsor. You observed the state of irritation in which the King was at the prorogation of Parliament, and I was told from good authority that he had been more heated and vehement than he had ever been seen before, and that serious alarm and apprehension had been entertained respecting his state. . . .[2] On Wednesday last I wrote to the King proposing Lord Southwell for the vacant Riband of St. Patrick, to which I have received the following reply this morning :—

'The King, however anxious to give the vacant Red Riband to the Viscount Southwell, must pause till his Majesty has brought the *vacillating* and *procrastinating* Lord Glenelg to confer the Military

[1] Lord Melbourne to Lord John, June 7, 1836.

[2] Lord Melbourne here relates a scene at Windsor, already recorded by Mr. Greville, in which the Duchess of Kent was the subject of the King's anger (Greville *Memoirs*, iii. 368). For the King's subsequent speech to Lord Aylmer, *ibid.* iii. 395.

Grand Cross of the Bath on that deserving and meritorious officer Lord Aylmer.'

I have written an answer respectfully remonstrating against the application of such epithets to a man who is his Minister, stating that I am as much responsible as Glenelg for any hesitation in conferring the Bath upon Lord Aylmer, and pointing out to him the unreasonableness of connecting the two cases. These circumstances, and this disposition of his, make our situation difficult. In his present mood, having got rid of the Parliament, and having five months before him, he would not be unwilling, I think, to drive me to a resignation. Much allowance ought to be made for his infirmities of all kinds, but it will not do to bear too much.—Yours faithfully,

MELBOURNE.

A week later he wrote again :—

I believe the advice given by the Speaker in the letter which I sent you is prudent and right; but there appears to me every day to be more difficulty in following it. I feel my temper giving way. To have two or three great points to fight would be nothing; but to be fretted by opposition upon every little matter is intolerable.

Things, however, gradually improved; and, though in the course of the autumn the King was 'worried' and 'vexed' by the unsatisfactory state of the Queen's health, he recovered his good humour, and showed it, according to Lord Melbourne, in a characteristic manner :—

South Street: November 26, 1836.

The King highly approves the day fixed for the meeting of Parliament, and begs that everybody will dine with him after the Council, and drink two bottles of wine a man.

While Lord Melbourne was discussing personal questions with the King, Lord John himself was otherwise engaged. He had taken a small house at Tunbridge Wells, a house so small that it contained no spare bedroom for a friend, and had gone down there for the summer holidays. Early in the autumn, while he was at Tonbridge, his wife had the misfortune to lose her mother. Death had not come so near Lord John since his own mother had passed away five-and-thirty years before. Yet probably his wife and he found some solace in their sorrow in the fresh interests which were springing up amongst them. Some months before a new face had been added to the domestic circle, Lady John having

presented her husband with a daughter. The child, which had been christened after its grandmother and mother Georgiana Adelaide, grew up in due time to marry the nephew of Sir Robert and son of General Peel, and thus to supply a close link between two families whose leading representatives were in her infancy engaged in such close rivalry.

While Lord John was at Tonbridge, where he remained throughout the autumn, Mr. Moore paid him a visit, sleeping at the hotel, but living otherwise with his hosts. He found—

Lady John very agreeable, and a nicer little pair than the two in their several ways it would not be easy to find.[1]

Mrs. Maurice Drummond has supplied a sketch of Lord John's life at home, which, perhaps, may help to illustrate Mr. Moore's meaning.

Many can describe Lord Russell as he appeared on the stage of the great world ; . . . only the children he brought up can know how his kindness of heart, his earnestness, his simplicity of nature and purpose, heightened and sweetened the lives of all within the narrow circle of home. . . . The experience of later life has made it clear to me that, to be what he was by his own fireside, he must have been singularly free from the moral twists which have hindered the usefulness of many great men. He was too simple-minded to be morbid, too unselfish to be self-conscious, too kind and too humble to be harsh in his judgment of those around him. He never spoke of money matters ; never talked over other people's affairs, never anticipated difficulties, and never said an unkind word to children or servants. He was never impatient or even hurried, and as to being worried, I never heard him use that word, and do not think he knew what it meant. . . . It may be said that people are naturally reticent before children, and that the latter have little opportunity of detecting the faults of their elders, but . . . from the very first . . . we saw more of him than is often the case as regards the children of far less busy men. I am therefore sure that my childish impression of him is a true one, and that it will be confirmed by those still better able to judge. . . He was then, as always, fond of repeating verses suggested by the beautiful scenes we passed through, and of relating anecdotes about his own foreign travels and the remarkable people he had seen. He had a great power of impressing his own view of a subject upon the mind of another, and this view, happily for those under his in-

[1] Moore's *Memoirs*, vii. 170.

fluence, always showed a perfectly healthy, natural, and what I may call whole-hearted appreciation of the matter in hand. His sketches of people and events were broad, sharply defined, and not easily forgotten.

As the children gradually grew older, Lord John took more and more pains to make us understand and care for good and interesting things. . . . When we became old enough to spend the evenings with him, we had the most delightful readings aloud. . . Lord Russell read aloud most admirably. He entered thoroughly into the subject whether story or poem, and was sometimes deeply moved by what he read. The first poems I remember his reading to us were 'Thalaba' and 'The Curse of Kehama.' Then followed Sir Walter Scott's novels. . . . I need hardly say that he often read Shakespeare to us; and later on 'David Copperfield,' 'The Old Curiosity Shop,' and part of 'Dombey and Son.' He did not altogether like Dickens in a sentimental mood, but he could not finish the account of little Paul Dombey's death, or the story of Lilian in the 'Chimes,' so deeply was he moved by these passages. . . . When we were with him either at dinner or in the evening, or out walking, riding, or driving, no time was wasted on small talk or society gossip (we did not know there was such a thing), and his mind seemed naturally to revert, when at rest, to literature or to recollections of travel. He must have been able very completely to throw off all thought of his anxieties and responsibilities as a public man. Having no idea of what these were, it did not occur to us to wonder that he could be so interested not only in books, but in flowers and animals, and in games. . . . I do not mean that he never talked politics before us; he told us a great deal about tendencies of parties in the State, but always calmly and judicially, not with the animus of one engaged in political warfare. Of cynicism and pessimism there were no traces in his conversation, and I should think none in his mind.

Mrs. Drummond's recollections of her childhood will help to illustrate Mr. Moore's short reference to his visit to Tonbridge. Perhaps they will explain a further passage from the same diary:—

Went to breakfast with Lord John. . . . Had in the children for me to see, and showed off all their little ways as nicely as any mother could do. It is indeed charming to see so much gentlemanly nature combined with a spirit so manly and determined as is certainly 'Johnny's.'

CHAPTER XI.

THE ACCESSION OF THE QUEEN.

IF the peace of a happy home shed its rich blessings on the little circle at Tunbridge Wells, its chief member had cause for constant anxiety. Ireland was, then as ever, the difficulty of English Government; the remedies which Lord John had desired to provide were still unapplied; and the Irish, discontented with their position, were again organised in associations. As Lord John wrote to Mr. Moore on the 6th of December—

> The General Association of Ireland seems to be getting very strong. Lyndhurst's speech [1] has come up, not in armed men, but in talking and agitating men, aye, and subscribing men too.

The Tithe Bill and Municipal Bill were no longer the only Irish measures ripe for settlement. A commission, appointed by the Government to inquire into the expediency of extending the Poor Law to Ireland, had drawn up a report recommending the State to employ the destitute poor on reclaiming waste lands. Instead of adopting a recommendation, opposed to the principles on which they had acted in England and to sound economical doctrine, Ministers decided on sending Mr. Nicholls, one of the English Poor Law Commissioners, to Ireland, and on instructing him to devise some more suitable remedy. Mr. Nicholls reported at the end of 1836; the Ministry, therefore, was in a position to legislate on this important subject.

Thus three Irish measures were ready for consideration.

[1] Lord Lyndhurst, in the debate on the Irish Municipal Bill, said of the Irish that they were 'aliens in blood, in speech, and in religion.' He, indeed, endeavoured to deny the use of the phrase, but Lord John declared that he heard it with his own ears.

The Tithe Bill was still unpassed; the municipalities of Ireland were still unreformed; and there was pressing need for providing for the distressed Irish poor. But various opinions were held by different persons on the relative importance of these subjects. Some Liberals, wearied with a protracted contest, and conscious that the Irish and Mr. O'Connell had ceased to attach much importance to it, were in favour of abandoning the Appropriation Clause. Others, unprepared to surrender the principle on which the party had acceded to office, were anxious to make some modifications in the form of the measure; while the King, inclining as usual to a Tory policy, desired to postpone both Tithe and Municipal Bill till the question of the Irish Poor Laws had been definitively settled.

How greatly the views of the Irish members were changed may be inferred from the following extracts from a letter which Mr. O'Connell wrote to Mr. Warburton on the 29th of December, 1836:—

The Church Rate (England) Abolition Bill, and the Corporate Reform (Ireland) Bill afford ample and the best occupation until Easter. If both are satisfactory in their details, and yet are rejected by the Lords, it may be the best ground for a dissolution. The Church Rate Bill should, in my opinion, throw the entire burden of the building and repairing of churches on the Protestants of the Establishment. There should not be any reference to the Consolidated Fund or to general taxation. The Irish Corporation Bill should be, with few exceptions, that *brought in* by the Ministry last year—the exceptions to consist only in leaving out of a few of the smaller towns. . . . I intend to be at my post the first hour of combat, and I doubt not that the entire 'Irish legion,' invalids excepted, will be in the front of the battle. A good Church Rate Bill for the Dissenters, and a good Corporation Bill for the Irish, will make an excellent first plan of battle. Let us get so much before we are swamped in the difficult details of the 'Irish Tithe Bill' with its troublesome 'Appropriation Clause.' I wish with all my heart that the Ministry were decently freed from that dilemma. If there were a proper deduction from the burden of the tithe, there would for the present be no surplus; and it is really too bad to risk *on such* a point a Ministry who are for the first time in history conquering the anti-Saxon spirit of Ireland, and adding eight millions to the King's subjects.

From Darrynane to Brighton was a far journey. But there is some use in contrasting the opinions which were entertained at the Irish abbey with those which were expressed at the King's Pavilion. Writing on January 2, 1837, in a letter approved by the King,[1] Sir H. Taylor, after alluding to the alarm and uneasiness with which William IV. regarded the character and proceedings of the General Association, went on—

His Majesty is sensible of the importance of municipal institutions and of the advantage which may be derived from the establishment of corporations in Ireland upon well-considered and safe principles. But, adverting to the general state of society in that country, to the religious differences which unhappily prevail, to the preponderance of a faith opposed to the Established Church of the realm, and to the influence actually exercised over the Catholic portion of the population, his Majesty conceives that a measure for which Ireland may not as yet be duly prepared ought to be approached with extreme caution ; and, above all, that it would be desirable if possible to come to some understanding with those who so strenuously opposed the Bill last year, before another is introduced resembling it in its general features, and tending to produce much angry and eventually useless discussion. His Majesty cannot help suggesting whether this difficulty and renewed embarrassment might not be obviated by postponing the establishment of municipal corporations in Ireland until the introduction of a Poor Law in Ireland, and its operation, should have prepared and *fitted* the mass of the population in some degree for the enjoyment of another of those institutions which England conceives beneficial for herself. The King has learned with sincere satisfaction that on the subject of tithes your Lordship considers that, after the experience of the last two years, it would be useless and vexatious to propose a measure containing provisions exactly similar to those which, in 1835 and 1836, were rejected, and that you are disposed to abandon the Appropriation Clause altogether, rather than again press on the two Houses a Bill which must ultimately fail.

Thus both at Darrynane and at Brighton there was a

[1] In a few instances the King's letters to his Ministers are holograph. In many more they are in Sir H. Taylor's handwriting, but in the King's name. Most of them are from Sir H. Taylor by the King's order, but on the more important of these William IV. used to mark his approval by writing 'Approved. William R.'

growing desire to abandon the question on which the Ministry had been founded; but Mr. O'Connell desired to thrust the Municipal Bill into the forefront of the battle, while the King was anxious to postpone its introduction to the distant day when an Irish Poor Law was passed and in operation.

Lord John forwarded Sir H. Taylor's letter to the Prime Minister, who returned it with the observation, 'I see Sir H. Taylor considers you to have decided upon giving up the Appropriation Clause.'[1] But he made no remonstrance; and, as Lord John was detained at Oakley, where Lord Tavistock was residing, by his wife's illness, and the meetings of the Cabinet were consequently postponed, Ministers had no opportunity of considering the details of their policy till the eve of the session. Though the Speech from the throne[2] recommended early consideration for the Irish Municipal Bill, the Irish Tithe Bill, and the Irish Poor Law, the Cabinet had not made up its mind how to deal with the second of these measures when Parliament met.

The Irish Municipal Bill was more forward, and a week after the meeting Lord John, in asking leave for its introduction, made a great speech on Irish policy. Three thousand five hundred Irish Protestants had just met in Dublin, and had passed a series of resolutions denouncing Lord Mulgrave's conduct and the formation of the General Association. Lord John quoting from a speech—in which Mr. Fox had avowed his desire that the whole Irish government should be regulated by Irish notions and Irish prejudices, and his belief that the more Ireland was under Irish government, the more she would be bound to English interests—proceeded to argue that Lord Mulgrave had acted upon the principles laid down by Mr. Fox. The formation of the General Association was not due to any neglect on the part of the Irish Government, but to the conduct of the Tory party in the House of Lords. 'As the forcible phrase of Lord Plunket expressed

[1] Lord Melbourne to Lord John, Jan. 5, 1837.

[2] The King made an excuse of the Duchess of Gloucester's illness not to open Parliament in person. Lord Melbourne told Lord John that no King had ever stayed away before except on account of some personal infirmity of his own.

it, in speaking of the Catholic Association, it is the spawn of your own wrong.' Lord John added—

Can we wonder at such things? . . . Your oppression taught them to hate—your concessions to brave you : you exhibited to them how scanty was the stream of your bounty; and how full the tribute of your fear.

The speech gave infinite satisfaction to Lord Mulgrave, who sent at once from Dublin—

Just one line to say how delighted I am with your bold and brilliant speech.

Lord Melbourne awaited the result with some anxiety. Writing on the following morning, before he had read the newspaper, he said—

I hope you have said nothing damned foolish. I thought you were rather teeming with some imprudence yesterday.

He had no reason to complain of his colleague when he had read his clear and vigorous defence of Lord Mulgrave's policy. Nor did he complain when, in winding up the debate, Lord John referred to the position of the Irish Church and stated his intention of postponing any Bill on this subject till a later period of the session.

But no personal feeling of mine, no false pride on my part, shall stand in the way of a settlement of this great question.

Lord Melbourne at once put the natural interpretation on these words, and expressed his concurrence with them.

What you said at the end of the debate is understood to intimate pretty plainly the giving up the Appropriation Clause.[1] Is it necessary to bring that question again before the Cabinet? I rather fear the wrong-headedness of some of them. It would be a pity, now that we are well launched before the wind with good principles, to run the risk of having our course interrupted by any foolish differences amongst ourselves.

It is clear, therefore, that, in the first ten days of February 1837, Lord John and Lord Melbourne were agreed on aban-

[1] Mr. Greville evidently understood Lord John's words in the same way. (*Memoirs*, iii. 388.)

doning Appropriation, and on pressing forward the other Irish measures for the relief of the Irish poor and for the reform of Irish municipalities.

In accordance with this determination, Lord John, on the 13th of February, introduced the Irish Poor Law. The speech in which he explained its provisions afforded a striking proof of his moral courage. Nothing that the Whigs had done was so unpopular as the Reform of the English Poor Law; and Lord John went out of his way to defend the principles on which the Act of 1834 had been based. Courage often succeeds where pusillanimity fails; and the House received Lord John's proposal with more favour than he had expected. The King wrote to him on the 14th of February—

> He rejoices to learn that the measure . . . has been so well received, in general, by the House of Commons. His Majesty derives great satisfaction from any proof that there may be questions of public interest and utility, the discussion of which is divested of that party spirit which unfortunately prevails to so great an extent at this period.

The preliminary success which was thus achieved was soon followed up. Four days later, on the 17th of February, the House read the Irish Municipal Bill a second time without a division. On the 23rd it resolved itself into committee on this measure, after the Government had defeated a motion of Lord Francis Leveson's, supported by the whole strength of the Tory party, by 322 votes to 242.

Three days after this division, Miss Fox (Lord Holland's sister) wrote to a friend—

> My brother is delightfully well, and Lord John's spirits rise with the occasion. His speeches this year are in the noblest style of statesmanlike oratory and enlarged views. You cannot imagine how high he stands, not only in the estimation of his friends, but in that of his enemies. It is quite astonishing to see the energy of mind overcome the weakness of his bodily frame.

The Government had not won so great a victory during the two years in which Lord Melbourne had held office. It was encouraged by its success to introduce its Church Rate Bill. Three years before, during the administration of Lord

Grey, Lord Althorp had endeavoured to abolish church rates, applying 250,000*l.* a year from the land tax to the repair of parish churches. The proposal did not meet with much support. Nonconformists contended that there was no reason why the State should apply its resources to the support of an institution which, from their standpoint, was already too rich. The project was accordingly withdrawn; but, before its withdrawal, Lord John distinctly avowed his desire to maintain the Church, and his belief that all classes should contribute to its support.[1]

Lord John desired, in 1836, to deal with the subject on the lines which had already found favour with Lord Althorp. But the Cabinet was of opinion that it was unwise to touch it until the other measures of relief to the Dissenters and of Church Reform had passed. Their passage would determine whether the Church had surplus revenues of her own which could be made available for the repair of the fabrics. If Parliament, after full deliberation, decided that there was no available surplus, its decision would afford a good reason for the proposed measure.[2] In the result it was discovered that the bishops' estates, with good management, could be made more than sufficient for the income of the bishoprics; and the surplus, it was thought, could not be better applied than to the purposes for which church rates had been levied. The Ministry accordingly decided on a scheme of this character; and, as it was contrary to the opinion which Lord John had expressed, it was entrusted to Mr. Spring Rice. Its introduction led to a long debate, and the Ministry only eventually succeeded in passing its preliminary resolution by 273 votes to 250.[3]

This division destroyed the effect which had previously

[1] *Hansard*, xxii. 1048, and xxiii. 507.

[2] The opinion quoted in the text was Lord Palmerston's.

[3] The narrowness of this majority was not the only inconvenience which resulted from this motion. On the formation of Lord Melbourne's Administration the Archbishops and Bishops who were serving on the Ecclesiastical Commission agreed to continue on it on the understanding that Ministers were prepared (1) 'to act on the Report already given in by the commissioners in respect to the arrangement of bishoprics, transferring all the privileges of the two bishoprics which are to be united with others to the two new sees;' (2) to resist any motion

been produced by the great majority on the Irish Corporation question. Politicians began again to speculate on a defeat of the Ministry, a change of Government, and a dissolution of Parliament; and, when the session was interrupted on March 23 by the Easter recess, these rumours were still prevalent. Lord John had been suffering through the session from influenza and cough. Illness compelled him to absent himself from the House for a few days before the Easter holidays, and to husband his own strength, in anticipation of the extraordinary efforts which it was obvious would be indispensable after Easter.

A week after Parliament reassembled, on April 10, the House of Commons was asked to read the Irish Municipal Bill a third time; and Lord John took occasion to say that 'this was a vital question to the present Administration.' He thus deliberately staked the existence of the Ministry on the success of the measure. But the declaration only encouraged Tory peers to fresh opposition. On May 5, after a great meeting at Apsley House, they went down to the House of Lords, and, on the advice of the Duke of Wellington, postponed the further consideration of the Municipal Bill until June 9, in order that the other measures relating to Ireland might be before them. This unusual proceeding was calculated to irritate extreme Radicals; and many of them thought that Lord John should have replied to the challenge of the Peers by withdrawing the Tithe Bill, which had been introduced into the Commons on the 1st of May. Instead of doing so, in a

which may be made in Parliament hostile to the Church; (3) to refuse committees, if moved for, on matters connected with the Church Establishment; (4) in respect to church rates not to depart from the principle of Lord Althorp's measure, 'which we understand to be that it is the duty of the State to provide that the churches of the Establishment be kept in decent and substantial repair.' Mr. Spring Rice's measure was therefore a violation of this pledge, and the Bishops, with their original lay colleagues on the commission, declined, 'while this measure is pending, to concur in submitting any further recommendation to his Majesty as commissioners for considering the state of the Established Church in England and Wales.' Lord Melbourne, confronted with the pledge that he had given, frankly admitted that he had forgotten it, but that if he had remembered it he should have informed the Primate explicitly that he had changed his opinion. Copies of the whole correspondence are among the Russell papers. So far as I am aware, the transaction has hitherto been entirely unknown.

speech of firmness and moderation he expressed his intention of proceeding with the other measures, and to

wait and see whether we have mistaken the intention of our opponents, instead of adopting that decided course which it would afterwards be shown we were not justified in pursuing . . . It is essential . . . that the majority of the House of Commons should remain firmly united together on the present occasion; and I think I may say that if the supporters of the present Administration continue their present confidence in it, with such support, and with such a majority, the Ministry will not desert them.

A contemporary critic complained with some reason that this promise of Lord John's did not correspond with the declaration which he had made before Easter. On the former occasion he had declared the Municipal Bill to be vital;[1] on the latter, he promised to go on so long as the Administration was supported by the House of Commons.[2] And, in the abstract, Mr. Greville was right in his criticism.[3] The grounds on which the Ministry had taken its stand were shifted. But no practical importance attaches to the distinction. Few even of those who condemn the Whigs for clinging to office would contend that any cause for resignation had yet arisen. The defeat of the Municipal Bill might have necessitated, its postponement would not have justified, their resignation.

The attitude of the Peers was, however, alarming, because it indicated the sense which they entertained of the weakness

[1] *Hansard*, xxxvii. 1085.

[2] *Hansard*, xxxviii. 696.

[3] *Greville*, iii. 397. The Prime Minister was opposed to resignation. He wrote to Lord John (April 1, 1837): 'I have only two scruples about resigning: one lest we should bring about a state of things in which it is difficult to form a Government; and the other lest our own friends should be discontented with us, and hold us to have abandoned them. The first, perhaps, is a chimerical fear, and one which vanity and self-opinion very much ministers to, and therefore not to be entertained. But I, being somewhat of an alarmist on this side, not having quite the confidence in the stability of popular and constitutional forms of government which others have, and thinking them very likely to break up of themselves, and from the exaggeration of their own principles, cannot feel quite free from it. The second is a very material consideration. I should be very desirous of carrying with us in our move the feelings of those who have supported us.' Is it not probable that Lord John spoke his own mind on April 11, and the Prime Minister's mind on May 8?

of the Government. And this weakness became more apparent after a short Whitsuntide recess. For, on the 23rd of May, the House of Commons, renewing the consideration of Mr. Spring Rice's resolutions on church rates, only passed them by a slender majority of five—a division which, the King wrote next day—

> makes it obvious, as observed by Lord John Russell, that no Bill on the subject can be expected to pass during the present session.

The House of Commons was, therefore, withdrawing the support which Lord John had declared would enable the Administration to maintain its ground; and a fresh reason for retirement had consequently arisen.

Yet, neither after this vote, nor after the renewed postponement of the Municipal Bill in the Lords, did the Ministers retire. Circumstances, in fact, made it impossible for them to resign. For, in the middle of May, the King was seriously indisposed. On the last day of May, indeed, he was well enough to sign a letter, which he addressed to Lord John, stating his gratification at the feeling which prevailed in the country on the subject of his health, and announcing his gradual recovery. But Lord John received no further letter from him. A week later the King was so much weaker that Sir Herbert Taylor took upon himself the responsibility of withholding important business from him. From that time he gradually sank; and, on the 20th of June, he died.

The death of William IV. and the accession of Queen Victoria to the throne had a decisive effect on the fortunes of Lord John Russell and of the Melbourne Administration. Though, so far as Lord John was concerned, the King's distrust had long given way to confidence, and Monarch and Minister regarded one another with respect and affection, there could be no doubt that the death of the King had removed one difficulty from the path of the Administration. It was unlikely that the new Queen would share the prejudices of the old sovereign, and regard the Radical support which was essential to the existence of the Ministry as an adequate reason for its overthrow. The commencement of a new reign

moreover necessitated an appeal to the electors, and afforded the Ministers an opportunity of determining whether they did, or did not, enjoy the confidence of the country.

Under these circumstances there was no longer any question about the resignation of Ministers. The fate of the Government depended not on the fortunes of a measure, but on the verdict of the country; and the men whose business it was to know thought that the ten-pound householders were on the side of the Whigs. Mr. Stanley, the Secretary to the Treasury, wrote on the 5th of July—

> As far as I can at present calculate, I think we shall gain by the dissolution to the extent of twenty-five or thirty, but still it is as yet uncertain what turn public feeling will take. It is decidedly in our favour. . . . In Ireland we shall, I think, gain eight, perhaps twelve; in Scotland two; in England from fifteen to twenty.

But these sanguine anticipations were not destined to be fulfilled. The great body of the electors disliked the Poor Law; and, to its credit, the Government firmly adhered to that measure. The Church threw in its lot against a party which had dared to propose the abolition of church rates. These and other circumstances militated against the Whigs. The Tories in the new Parliament mustered a compact force of at least 316 members;[1] they commanded the votes of nearly one half of the House of Commons.

The failure which the Whigs experienced in many parts of England did not happily affect the issue at Stroud. Serjeant Adams, a Tory lawyer, who ventured on appealing to the electors, experienced a decisive defeat; and the two old members, Mr. Poulett Scrope and Lord John, were returned by a large majority. Liberal Stroud celebrated the victory by a great banquet at which Lord John occupied the place of honour on the chairman's right, and delivered a speech which soon became famous.

> The rule of Tory Ministries in this country was neither short in its duration nor limited in its extent . . . and I ask you whether it be not a fair statement to say that they did many things which were

[1] Writing to the Queen on August 15, 1837, Lord John put the result as 340 Ministerial, 313 Opposition, 5 doubtful.

evil ; [and] that they left undone many things which were good and practicable ? . . . In no very long period of years they increased the debt of this country from 250,000,000*l.* to 800,000,000*l.* ; they imposed most burdensome taxes upon the people . . . they depreciated the currency . . . they effected also a union with Ireland—not a union of the interests, of the feelings, and of the affections of the people of England and Ireland, but a union bought with money . . . besides honours and titles lavished without stint. [But it was argued that the Tories had now become Conservatives, and, as such, were entitled to their respect.] If they say that the distinction of Whig and Tory should no longer be kept up, I am ready, in opposition to their name of Conservative, to take the name of Reformer, and to stand by that designation. [In all times and in all countries there have been Reformers and Conservatives.] What was Luther ? Luther was a Reformer ; Leo X., who opposed the Reformation, was a Conservative. What was Galileo ? Galileo, in astronomy and in science, was a Reformer ; the Inquisition, who put him into prison, was Conservative. The Christians, who suffered martyrdom in Rome, were Reformers ; Nero, who put these Christians to death, was a Conservative.

But, though Lord John thus took his stand on Reform, and endeavoured in doing so to coin a new name for his party, he was careful to define his own position.

I am perfectly aware that it has been said that the real fault of the Ministry was that they did not go far and fast enough : that they ought to propose vote by ballot, triennial Parliaments, household suffrage, and an elective House of Lords. . . . I must declare to you freely and frankly that I see no sufficient cause for altering the ancient constitution of this country . . . and that by that constitution I for one am prepared to abide. If others think differently from me let them stand the risk of making the experiments they desire to see tried ; but they cannot, I think, call upon me, holding the opinions I have stated, to maintain otherwise than I have done, that the ancient constitution of Crown, Lords, and Commons, is capable of upholding, and well calculated to uphold, that which we all desire to see upheld—the prosperity and the liberty of this great empire.

It would hardly have done for the leader of the Reformers to end with a Conservative sentiment. Lord John dexterously made the accession of a new Queen the pretext for referring to the reforms which he desired to see accomplished.

In a passage which was prophetic in the truest sense of the term he went on—

We have had glorious female reigns. Those of Elizabeth and Anne led us to great victories. Let us now hope that we are going to have a female reign illustrious in its deeds of peace—an Elizabeth without her tyranny, an Anne without her weakness. Let us put up a prayer that the illustrious princess, who has just ascended the throne with the purest intentions and the justest desires, may have the good fortune to see slavery entirely abolished; crime, while it is seldom visited by the dreadful punishment of death, diminished by the operation of better laws and improved institutions; let us hope that she may have the consolation of seeing her people better educated—deriving their strength, deriving their conduct, deriving their loyalty, from enlightened religious and moral principles. . . . So strengthened, I trust that we may succeed in making the reign of Victoria celebrated among the nations of the earth, and to all posterity, and that 'England may not forget her precedence of teaching the nations how to live.'[1]

No Hebrew seer ever made a bolder or truer prediction. Prophet and monarch both lived to see the fulfilment of the prophecy; and among the many great men who laboured to accomplish it, none worked harder or strove more successfully than Lord John.

The new Parliament did not meet till November 15. The interval Lord John passed at Endsleigh, gaining, by fresh air and exercise, health for the coming struggle. During much of the time the Prime Minister was at Windsor, discharging deliberately and intentionally the functions of private secretary to the Queen as well as of Prime Minister.[2] During that time he was in almost daily communication with Lord John, and deprecating in his letters the extensive changes which

[1] I have placed the concluding words within inverted commas, as they are, I believe, taken from Milton.

[2] Mr. Torrens seems to be unaware of Lord Melbourne's strong feelings on this point. But Lord Melbourne wrote to Lord John in reference to an attack of Lord Brougham's upon him: 'It appears to me to be highly to be desired upon constitutional grounds that the Queen should not have a private secretary. To obviate this necessity it is absolutely required that the Minister should be always near her, and it appears to me to be hardly fair or just that this should be represented as the result of a love of Court favour.' (December 17, 1837.)

other men were advocating by the admission of Lord Durham, Mr. Charles Buller, or other Radicals, into either the Cabinet or the Ministry.[1]

Endsleigh: September 9, 1837.

My dear Melbourne,—It is certainly of no use to conceal the difficulty of our situation. I do not at all think as some do that the members of the new House of Commons will be more steady to us than the last. On the contrary, the last was pledged to us from the first day, and stood to its pledge to the last. . . . There is another very serious difference. I never feared that we should not be able, as long as we maintained our principles, to prevent any serious inroad upon the constitution.[2] But I always thought that the Whig party, as a party, would be destroyed by the Reform Bill. Their strength lay in certain counties, and in close boroughs; the Tories, by the new construction of the House, were sure to beat them in the counties, and the Radicals in the open towns. . . At the same time, I do not think that the Tories, especially under so cautious a leader as Peel, will be forward to seize the government. A Tory Ministry, with three-fourths of Ireland, more than half Scotland, and not less than 300 members of the House of Commons against them would be far more 'weak and inefficient' than our own. . . . I confess I do not think that Ireland would at first be very dangerous to them, but I beg you to recollect what has happened with regard to that country. The attempt to govern on Orange maxims broke down in 1829; the attempt to govern by a neutrality between different parties broke down in 1834. Neither of these plans can be permanently re-established. Peel must either attempt conciliation and disgust his Orange friends, or support his Orange friends and produce general resistance—moral probably rather than physical. I remember you were the first person by whom I heard it said that Ireland would henceforth claim to be treated according to its importance as a branch

[1] 'I have no personal objection to any man. But everybody, after the experience we have had, must doubt whether there can be peace or harmony in a Cabinet of which Lord Durham is a member.' (Lord Melbourne to Lord John, July 7, 1837.) 'Ellice wants to put in C. Buller. This, after what I have caused to be said to Lord Durham about not wishing to give the Government a more Radical character at the present moment, ... would be impossible.' (*Ibid.* July 18, 1837.)

[2] Writing on August 10, Lord John had said: 'The sum total is perhaps that very old difficulty of Whig Administrations, that their friends expect them to do more than is possible; so that if they attempt little their friends grow slack, and if they attempt much their enemies grow strong.'

of the United Kingdom. It has done so: and will do so: and has a right to do so. . . .—Yours ever,

J. R.

Endsleigh: September 13, 1837.

My dear Melbourne,—Whatever course we may take, no one can expect that we should carry either the Appropriation Clause or the Church Rate Bill in the present Parliament. With respect to the first, whether we propose it or not, I must say that I think the compromise proposed by the Duke of Wellington a very fair one, and that we should not be justified in keeping unsettled the three Irish questions unless the details were very unfair and unequal. As to church rates, we have proposed two Bills -- one objected to by the Dissenters, the other by the Church. I do not think we are bound to revive these Bills, or propose another, till a better temper prevails. In the meantime we can propose our committee, but not till February. Reasons enough for this delay. Supposing such a course to be adopted, there remains to be considered the very narrow ground on which we stand. It seems to me that the greater part of those called Radicals are reasonable enough, and that they do not seek for grounds of difference. Witness the votes given by Grote, Molesworth, Warburton, &c., in favour of our policy in Spain which they all disapproved. Such being the case we should do well to unite such people with us as much as possible, and, still more, to carry with us those Whigs who are Whigs in party and Radicals in opinion. There are two things which I think would be more acceptable than any others to this body—the one to make the ballot an open question,[1] the other to remove the Tories from the political command of the army. . . . The late election has converted many to the ballot, and it is not now made a threat as it was last autumn by Molesworth. . . . .—Yours ever,

J. R.

Windsor Castle: September 15, 1837.

My dear John,—. . . With respect to our future course I mainly agree in all the first part of your letter . . . But I have a great dislike to making any alteration about the ballot. I have a great objection to a change in the grounds on which the Government was formed.

[1] Writing to Lord Melbourne on August 11, 1837, Lord John forwarded to him a letter from Lord Brougham strongly objecting to the ballot being an open question. Lord John added: 'I had asked him whether he had said that ballot ought to be an open question, and, without expressing an opinion myself, said that I saw no disgrace in such a course generally, as Parliamentary Reform in 1782, Catholic question from 1812 to 1827, and many others had been open questions.'

I think our principle should be to hold the ground which we have taken, but not to occupy new ground rashly. I doubt, therefore, the policy of it as being an advance in a Radical direction; but, more than that, with the strong hostile opinions which, the more I think of it, I cannot but form, I hardly feel justified in giving the question such a lift as would be given it by making it open. I feel certain that it would be inoperative for the evils which it is intended to cure, and that it would produce many other evils from which we are at present free. . . .—Yours faithfully,

MELBOURNE.

Lord John gave way. For some time further the ballot remained a question on which the members of the Ministry were all required to vote with the Prime Minister. Lord John incurred serious unpopularity from this concession; and Lord Melbourne's conservative dislike of change was probably instrumental in postponing secret voting for more than thirty years.

Lord John stayed at Endsleigh till the beginning of October. On the 11th of that month Lady John and he reached Bowood on their way to London; and at Bowood they found the Prime Minister, who, by a long standing arrangement, had come thither to meet them. During their stay at Bowood the party was increased by Lord Glenelg, Mr. Sydney Smith, Mr. Rogers, Mr. Moore, and others. 'Sour kraut' journalists (to use Mr. Moore's epithet) speculated on the meaning of this great Ministerial conclave, while the party at Bowood laughed at these speculations and at Mr. Sydney Smith's boisterous humour.[1]

For at Bowood Mr. Sydney Smith was in the best of

[1] Moore's *Memoirs*, vii. 203. Mr. Sydney Smith at that time was in some dudgeon with the Whigs. He was sore at the neglect of his own claims, and he was angry at the proposed transfer of the capitular patronage to the Bishops which the Whigs were promoting. He had already published his attack on the prelates in his letter to Archdeacon Singleton, and he was probably meditating the pamphlet in which, after glorifying Lord John at the expense of his colleagues, he concluded by throwing him overboard with the rest. See Moore's *Memoirs*, vii. 224; and cf. *ibid.* p. 228. The passage, which gave special pain, was as follows: 'There is not a better man in England than Lord John Russell, but his worst failure [? feature] is that he is utterly ignorant of all moral fear; there is nothing he would not undertake. I believe he would perform the operation for the stone, build St. Peter's, or assume (with or without ten minutes' notice) the command of the Channel Fleet; and no one would discover by his manner

humour; and a later generation, born in a less fertile age, may regret that it can never have an opportunity of listening to such conversation as must have been sustained round Lord Lansdowne's dinner-table by the culture of Lord Melbourne, the full mind and terse phrase of Lord John, the boisterous gaiety of Mr. Sydney Smith, the refined and instructed wit of Mr. Moore, and the keen, if bitter, satire of Mr. Rogers.

From Bowood, Lord and Lady John went to Brighton, where the Queen was staying at the Pavilion, and where Lord Melbourne had already preceded him; and after a few days' visit, in which Lady John and he dined on two successive evenings with the Queen, he returned to London to prepare

that the patient had died, the church tumbled down, and the Channel Fleet been knocked to atoms. I believe his motives are always pure, and his measures often able, but they are endless, and never done with that pedetentous pace and pedetentous mind in which it behoves the wise and virtuous improver to walk. He alarms the wise Liberals, and it is impossible to sleep soundly while he has command of the watch.' In a note to the passage he added: 'Another peculiarity of the Russells is that they never alter their opinions: they are an excellent race, but they must be trepanned before they are convinced.' (Sydney Smith's *Works*, ed. 1840, iii. 114.) But, though Mr. Sydney Smith was sore at the neglect by his friends both of himself and his order, he had as little intention of quarrelling with them as he had hope of persuading them. In February 1837 he wrote to Lord John:—

My dear John,—You say you are not convinced by my pamphlet. I am afraid that I am a very arrogant person. But I do assure you that, in the fondest moments of self-conceit, the idea of convincing a Russell that he was wrong never came across my mind. Euclid (dear John) would have had a bad chance with you if you had happened to have formed an opinion that the interior angles of a triangle were not equal to two right angles. The more poor Euclid demonstrated, the more you would not have been convinced.

Influenza, indigestion, and loss of patronage to the Bishops.

I shall have great pleasure in dining with you Sunday.

I thought you had known me better than to imagine I really took such things to heart. I will fight you to the last drop of my ink; dine with you to the last drop of your claret; and entertain for you, *bibendo et scribendo*, sincere affection and respect.

SYDNEY SMITH.

33 Charles Street: Feb. 10, 1837.

A week later, after drinking Lord John's claret, he added: 'Don't go out of office. It is the greatest crime you can commit. The Whigs are the best Government which was ever in this country. You individually are rapidly rising in the opinion of the best people.'

for the coming session. His speech at the Stroud dinner had been lately published as a pamphlet, and had been made the subject of an article by Mr. Croker in the 'Quarterly,' of which the Duke of Bedford said that 'he had never read a more bitter, malignant, or rascally performance.' The article was the less deserved, because Lord John had displayed at Stroud a marked moderation; and he was about to incur the indignation of advanced Reformers by reiterating the same moderate counsels. In the debate on the Address, after asserting that Lords Grey and Althorp had concurred in making the Reform Act extensive in the hope that it might be final, he went on to admit that the people of England were entitled, if they chose to do so, to reconsider its provisions. But he added emphatically—

> I am not myself going to do so . . . It is quite impossible for me, having been one who brought forward the measure of Reform, who feel bound by the declarations then made, to take any part in those large measures of reconstruction . . . without being guilty of what I think would be a breach of faith towards those with whom I was then acting. If the people of England are not of that mind, they can prevent me from taking part either in the Legislature or in the councils of the sovereign: they can place others there who may have wider, more extended, more enlarged, and more enlightened views; but they must not expect me to entertain these views. They . . . must not call upon me to do that which I not only consider unwise, but which I should not feel myself justified in proposing without a breach of faith and honour.

And, on the following night, when Mr. Charles Buller charged him with repeating the blunder which the Duke of Wellington had committed in 1830 of declaring against all Reform, he made what Mr. Greville declared was, 'by the agreement of all parties, an incomparable speech, vindicating his own consistency, explaining his motives for making the declaration, and repelling with great dignity the charges with which he was assailed.' Lord John thus emphasised his previous statement by the avowal—

> When I spoke last night, I did not speak altogether from the impulse of the moment. I had considered beforehand the course which I should take. My determination was, if topics were put

forward which I utterly disapproved of . . . then it was my intention, as it was my duty, whatever obloquy or whatever imputation might be cast upon me . . . not to withhold from the House the solemn and decided expression of my opinion.

Men of mark applauded the Minister's language. Lord Spencer, who had been informed of his intention beforehand, wrote—

I am delighted to hear your determination, but not surprised. I hope and trust you will swim; but, if you go down, it must be with colours flying.

And Lord Tavistock, who was personally prepared to go further than his brother, said with much truth—

The more I reflect, the more I feel satisfied you did right. . . . No public man, especially in your position, can be efficacious but in proportion as his character stands high. In acting as you have done, you have put yourself on lofty ground, and I think you will find the benefit of it. Many people—narrow-minded and poor reasoners they must be—think you were imprudent and might have said less, that is, you might by some sort of shuffling, some ambiguity of expression, have evaded the question and thus put off the evil day. . . . What was to be gained by so doing? Who would have been deceived? Who satisfied? It is in all cases better to do early and from foresight that which we shall be obliged to do from necessity at last. . . . By drawing the storm upon your head a little earlier, you have probably saved yourself from much eventual embarrassment.

But the storm, while it lasted, was very severe. Lord John was taunted by the Radicals with betraying his party, and they thenceforward fastened on him the nickname 'Finality Jack.' Happily he could preserve his accustomed phlegm in cloud as well as in sunshine: and he received sympathy from an unexpected quarter. His old colleague, Lord Brougham, had been lashed into a fury by the neglect of his own claims and by the appointment of Lord Cottenham to the Chancellorship; and in this very session had indulged in an attack on Lord Melbourne, which induced the Prime Minister to retaliate in what Lord Brougham, writing to Lord John, called 'woman-like—Billingsgate-woman-like—language.' But he exempted Lord John from the indignation with which he regarded the

rest of the Ministry; and, after his first angry disappointment in 1835, resumed his former affectionate relations with his old colleague. The 'caro Giovanni,' as he called him in 1828, became 'dear J. R.' in 1837. At this juncture some Reformers waited on Lord Brougham to ask him to preside at a great Reform dinner, and expressed to him their annoyance at Lord John's desertion of the cause. Lord Brougham, so he wrote to Lord John—

distinctly denied all they urged as to you individually, and complained of the gross injustice of charging you, who were the stoutest Reformer of the whole, and one that had been the longest and steadiest in the cause and lent it the most effectual assistance.

In another letter he added—

My sincere friendship for your family—to whom I feel a kind of allegiance on public grounds, and an affection founded on esteem and the most lasting gratitude on private grounds—prohibits me from closing this letter without expressing what I feel on the late unfortunate occurrences which bid fair to produce schisms that I had hoped might be escaped. All I will say is this—and I have again and again said it in your defence—if any one complains of a new light having been given by what you have now spoken, he is unreflecting and unjust.[1] Let him rather complain of his own blindness. Neither you nor others ever did or said what was inconsistent with your present position. . . . But I must make one remark in addition. I have repeatedly warned some of your colleagues of the dangerous game they were, not playing themselves, but allowing others to play. . . . I mean letting their underlings and *friends out of place* . . . systematically misrepresent them to keep the restive Reformers friendly or at least quiet. . . . I am beyond measure annoyed at seeing that the same kind of *friends* are at work even now drawing a distinction between you and your colleagues. My assertion everywhere is that, on the contrary, you are the stoutest Reformer of them all.

[1] That Lord Brougham did not exaggerate may be seen from the following extract from a speech of Lord John's in 1834: 'Ministers proposed a . . . large and extensive Reform because it was more likely to be permanent than a less Reform. This was the ground upon which the Reform Bill was introduced; this was the ground on which he was now prepared to stand by it. He was not prepared for a measure which would carry Reform further' (*Hansard*, xxiv. 509). The language of 1834 was, therefore, exactly identical with the finality declaration of 1837.

While Lord John strenuously resisted every attempt to meddle with the cardinal principles of the settlement of 1832, he entertained a strong wish to improve the machinery of that Act. Bribery, unfortunately, had not been abolished by the Reform Act; and the old Grenville Committees were unable, and perhaps unwilling, effectually to repress it. Lord John, on November 25, 1837, circulated a memorandum in the Cabinet suggesting that election petitions should in future be tried by a court of five members selected by the Speaker from lists furnished to him by the heads of the Chancery and Common Law Courts.[1] The Cabinet, however, was afraid of entertaining a project which deprived the House of Commons of the right of determining the validity of its members' elections: and the proposal is chiefly noteworthy for the proof that it affords that Lord John in this matter, as on other questions, was a generation before his time.

Speeches on the Address and on the Report were only incidents in the preliminary battles. The three great measures affecting Ireland were still unpassed. The Queen had specially alluded to all three in the speech from the throne, and the Cabinet still desired to make a fresh effort for their passage.

And, at the end of 1837, there appeared fair reason for hoping that all parties, wearied with a protracted contest, were anxious to arrive at some reasonable compromise. The Duke of Wellington, in particular, instead of imitating the language of Lord Lyndhurst, had been careful to say that he was most anxious to concur in any reasonable measure for a final and satisfactory settlement.[2] Lord Melbourne, always ready to meet his opponents half way, wrote to Lord John on the 13th of August—

[1] Lord John wished (1) The Chancellor, the two Chief Justices, and the Chief Baron to name each three barristers properly qualified; out of the list of each the Speaker to name one, making in all four. (2) The same judges in like manner to name one person each, out of whom the Speaker to choose a president of the court. (3) The said five to form a court sitting in London for England, Scotland (?), and Ireland. The old Grenville Committees were finally abandoned in 1839 for committees chosen by a committee of selection; and the trial of election petitions was not referred to an extra-Parliamentary tribunal till 1867, thirty years after Lord John had brought forward his plan.

[2] *Hansard*, xxxviii. 1682.

With respect to the measures about Ireland, I think we should so far concede to the Lords as to introduce them in the order in which they wish to have them. As they have professed a desire to settle all these questions, and as they hold that the Poor Law Bill and the Tithe Bill will afford them facilities for the Municipal Bill, I think we should introduce the Poor Bill first, which it will also in other respects be more convenient to do. Whether we shall persist in the Appropriation Clause or not entirely depends upon the feelings of our supporters. If they would have permitted us, I was for giving it up last session. It is one of those measures which looks specious at a distance, but which, when you approach it, vanishes into nothing.

Lord Melbourne's opinion was naturally adopted. On December 1 Lord John introduced the Poor Law Bill, and four days afterwards the Municipal Bill. But the House, occupied with the Civil List and matters relating to it, was unable to make any further progress with either measure before it separated for the Christmas recess; and on the eve of the adjournment news reached England which temporarily diverted attention from Irish affairs. Civil war had apparently begun in another part of her Majesty's dominions. Rebellion had broken out in Canada.

Discontent in Canada had been growing for half a century. After its conquest Lower Canada had been left under its old institutions, and, so long as the province was chiefly French, no material inconvenience had resulted. In the thirty years which succeeded its conquest, a large British immigration occurred. The new settlers clamoured for a change, and in 1791 Mr. Pitt's Administration gave them a brand-new constitution, consisting of a Governor, a Council appointed by the Crown, and an Assembly elected by the colonists. The Upper Chamber which was thus created soon became exclusively British; the Lower Assembly was chiefly French in its composition. A conflict soon rose between the two branches of the Legislature. The House of Assembly desired to obtain a more effectual control over the finances of the province. Finding its efforts opposed by the Upper Chamber, it demanded that the Legislative Council should be made elective, and, pending the acceptance of these demands, refused the supplies. It was almost indispensable to make some provision

for the deadlock which had thus arisen, and on the 6th of March, 1837, Lord John, in a speech of great length, proposed a series of resolutions, describing the difficulty that had occurred, resisting to some extent the claims of the colony, and applying certain of its revenues to the cost of civil government. Armed with the powers which the resolutions conferred upon him, Lord Gosford, the Governor of Canada, tried to induce the House of Assembly to give way. Failing in his attempt, he dissolved the Chamber. The dissolution led to riot and insurrection, the news of which reached England as Parliament was on the point of separating for the Christmas recess.

It was Lord John's duty on December 22 to refer to these bad news, and to state that, though they had not been confirmed by official despatches, the Government thought that it would not be justified in adjourning the House beyond the middle of January. Lord John's announcement was followed by a debate, which was practically closed by a second speech from Lord John, which Mr. Greville declared was—

just such as a Minister ought to make—manly, temperate, and constitutional. He is a marvellous little man, always equal to the occasion, afraid of nobody, fixed in his principles, clear in his ideas, collected in his manner, and bold and straightforward in his disposition. He invariably speaks well when a good speech is required from him, and this is upon every important occasion, for he gets no assistance from any of his colleagues, except now and then from Howick.

The speech was made under great disadvantages, for the members of the Cabinet were not agreed on the policy to be pursued. 'Most of the Ministers' were in favour of repealing an Act, passed in 1831, which had placed a great portion of the colonial revenues under the control of the colony; a few of them were in favour of suspending the Canadian constitution; while Lord Howick was opposed to both measures, and, Lord Melbourne had 'very little doubt,' would resign if either of them were adopted. The Prime Minister was full of anxiety. He wrote on the last day of 1837—

I have the greatest dislike to the Government's breaking up

either in consequence of internal disunion which can never be made either adequate or satisfactory, or at a time of national danger and difficulty, which always looks like fear and shrinking from responsibility. But there may be no help for it.

Lord Howick gave way; and on the 16th of January, after a short Christmas recess, part of which had been spent by Lord and Lady John and their children with the Queen at Windsor, Lord John was able to assure the House that the Ministry had decided on suspending the Canadian constitution for four years, on sending Lord Durham to Canada, and on authorising him, in concert with any five members of the Council, to frame laws.

In this proposal the great majority of the House concurred. The resolutions which Lord John Russell proposed were adopted; a Bill founded on them was passed, and by the end of January the Ministers were able to devote themselves to the ordinary work of the session. Though the discussions on which they had been engaged had successfully terminated, the policy which the Government had adopted had increased the irritation of their more Liberal supporters. Men, who were already dissatisfied with Lord John's so-called 'Finality' declarations, were annoyed at the suspension of constitutional government in an important colony. They had soon an opportunity of displaying their vexation. On the 15th of February Mr. Grote, who is best known to the present generation as the historian of Greece, but who was regarded fifty years ago as the most earnest member of the Radical party, proposed a motion for the adoption of the ballot. It was almost impossible for the Ministry, after Lord John's speech in December, to do otherwise than exert its utmost strength in opposing it. Lord John, though he was far from well, came down to the House and spoke strongly against it, and the Ministry eventually succeeded in throwing out the motion by 315 votes to 198. Yet during the three years in which it had been in power it had never experienced a more significant division. The majority by which the Government was supported was largely composed of its usual opponents; the minority by which it was opposed consisted of its nominal supporters; and, to increase Lord John's personal difficulty,

everyone imagined that his own declaration had created the embarrassment, which was in reality due to the Prime Minister's reluctance to make the ballot an open question. Those, indeed, who were behind the scenes warmly approved Lord John's conduct. Lord Spencer wrote on the 20th of February—

> The list of the division was awful. It was one of the many things that disgusted me with politics, to see the selfishness of people. That a great body of men who feel and are convinced that it is of the utmost importance to keep your Government in power should do their best to throw you out on such a question as the ballot, merely because they will not hazard a little temporary popularity with their constituents, is too bad. I still am of opinion that the course you have taken will do you good and raise your character: for all, even of those who like myself approve of the ballot, must be pleased to see you take a firm and decided tone, and not allow yourselves to be driven about because those who ought to follow you want to lead.

Notwithstanding Lord Spencer's opinion, Lord John was naturally 'disgusted with the result of the division. It was reported all over the town that he had resigned.'[1] The rumour reached his father, who was passing the spring at Nice, and who wrote and told his son that he had been informed that he had been out and in again, and that he was actually out of office for three hours. But neither the Ministry nor its leader was out. On the contrary, the Government was about to be placed more firmly in office by an indiscreet movement on the part of its opponents. Sir William Molesworth, representing the feelings of the extreme Radicals, proposed on March 7 a direct vote of want of confidence in Lord Glenelg, the Colonial Minister. He grounded his attack, not merely on the Canadian revolt, but on the general policy of the Colonial Office, and on its refusal to grant autonomous institutions to New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land. Sir Robert Peel was unwilling to support such a motion, but, as his followers insisted on his seizing the opportunity of assaulting the Treasury Bench, he entrusted Lord Sandown with an alternative amendment, censuring the dilatory con-

[1] Greville, 2nd ser. i. 61.

duct of the Colonial Office, but condemning still more strongly the 'wicked and treasonable designs' of the insurgents in Canada. No fairer amendment was ever moved by an Opposition leader. It seemed to have been purposely drawn to prevent the Conservative party from forming even a temporary alliance with the Radicals, since it denounced the insurgents, whom the latter were disposed to favour, at least as vehemently as it censured the Minister whom they desired to condemn. Yet so strong was the Conservative phalanx in the Parliament of 1837 that the Ministry was in some apprehension of defeat, and Lord John himself told the Queen that he could not rely on a majority of more than fifteen.[1] The result of the division was twice as satisfactory. The Government was supported by 316 votes to 287, and the unexpected success naturally increased the confidence of its friends. Lord Spencer wrote on the 13th of March—

> I flatter myself you will now get smoothly over this session. Your victory was decisive.

Fortified by their success, Ministers resolutely pushed on the Bills which they had decided on introducing. Foremost among them was the Irish Poor Law. And this measure the Government had the satisfaction of carrying very much in the shape in which they had introduced it. But the Poor Law in a political sense was of less importance than the Tithe Bill, which had been the cause of the formation of the Ministry, or than the Municipal Bill, for the sake of which Mr. O'Connell and the Irish were ready to abandon the Appropriation Clause. For years these questions had occupied the time of the Legislature; and it was at least evident that, if the Ministry had been unable to carry Appropriation in the Parliament of 1835, it was hopeless for them to attempt to do so in the Parliament of 1837.

It was, however, almost as difficult to abandon the Appropriation Clause as to carry it; and Lord John thought that the possibility of doing so might be improved if some provision were simultaneously made for the Roman Catholic clergy. He suggested the alternative to the Viceroy at the

[1] Greville, 2nd ser. i. 76.

close of 1837; and Lord Mulgrave saw Dr. Murray, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, and replied on the 23rd of December—

I did not find that he personally saw the objections to the plan which most of his brethren did; but he said he feared it was as yet too soon to attempt it, from the state of feeling of either the Catholic clergy or laity. He volunteered to state that he considered such a question would present itself in a very different aspect coming from this Government than it would from any which had preceded it. But he added, 'I think it would require a little more time thoroughly to extend to questions affecting religion that entire confidence which for the first time they feel in everything affecting their temporal concerns.'

Archbishop Murray's answer made any scheme of concurrent endowment impossible; and, early in 1838, Lord John circulated a fresh proposal among his colleagues, converting the tithe composition into a rent-charge leviable on the first estate of inheritance; fixing the rent-charge at seventy-five per cent. of the composition; applying it to the payment of the Irish constabulary and other Irish purposes; charging on the Consolidated Fund an equal sum for the payment of the clergy; and allowing the sum so charged to be redeemed at sixteen years' purchase of the original composition, or at twenty-one and a quarter years' purchase of the rent-charge. Mr. Drummond, the Irish Secretary, made a determined but unsuccessful effort to induce the Government to modify their proposal by applying the rent-charge to the construction of arterial lines of railway in Ireland. Lord Mulgrave, writing on the 21st of February, supported Mr. Drummond. But the alternative was not adopted; and the Cabinet accepted Lord John's proposal with slight amendments, the most important of which was the reduction of the rent-charge from seventy-five to seventy per cent. of the composition.

Before the Ministry adopted this plan Lord John undertook, through the Archbishop of Canterbury, to consult the Primate of Ireland upon it. In doing so, on the 15th of March, he said that—

Unless the Church were disposed to accept it as a settlement the Government are of opinion that it would not be advisable to

renew the discussion of Irish tithes—to end in fresh disappointment.

The Archbishop of Armagh, replying through the same channel on the 20th of March, declared that—

> The proposed scheme of final adjustment, as it is presented in outline, appears to me to comprehend matters of so wide a range, and alterations of so important a character both as regards the nature of the sacrifices demanded and the sacrifices proposed, that it would be unsafe and indeed impossible to decide upon its character until its provisions shall have been embodied in a distinctive and formal shape.

Evidently compromise could not be effected with the heads of the Church. But perhaps the Ministry thought that there was more hope of arranging terms with their regular opponents. On the 27th of March Lord John asked Sir Robert Peel in the House of Commons whether it was the intention of the Opposition to move an instruction to the committee on the Irish Municipal Bill authorising the total abolition of these corporations; and Sir Robert asked Lord John whether it was intended to introduce a Tithe Bill, and whether it would contain an Appropriation Clause. Lord John thereupon pulled from his despatch box the outlines of the Tithe Bill on which the Cabinet had agreed, and announced his intention of inviting the House, on April 30, to adopt the necessary resolutions embodying it. This conversation proved to everyone that the end was very near. Unfortunately the Conservatives insisted, as a preliminary step, on attempting to expunge from the journals of the House the famous resolution which Lord John had proposed three years before. It was impossible for Lord John to submit to such a demand, and, in a speech of considerable power, which elicited the warm congratulations of Lord Mulgrave,[1] he successfully resisted the attempt. The Conservatives were beaten by 317 votes to 298, and the Government acquired fresh stability from the victory. But, on the other hand, the fact that the Opposition

[1] 'You ought to be eternally grateful to Acland, not merely as a Minister, but as an individual, for he gave you an opportunity of making a most admirable speech, which I read with the greatest pleasure.'—Lord Mulgrave to Lord John, May 21, 1838.

was able to muster some 300 votes in the lobby compelled Lord John to give way in details. The Bill was practically reduced into a project for converting the tithe composition into a rent-charge; and the rent-charge was ultimately fixed at seventy-five instead of seventy per cent. of the composition. Nor was this all. It was part of the implied contract between the two parties that, if the one side gave way on Appropriation, the other side should yield Municipal Reform; and, as a matter of fact, the Tory party thenceforward gave up their attempt to abolish local self-government in Ireland. But its leaders refused to confer on the smaller Irish towns the only franchise which the Liberal party thought tolerable; and, as the Tories in the Lords and the Liberals in the Commons equally refused to give way, the Municipal Bill was lost.

Lord Melbourne, with the careless indifference which was inseparable from his character, thought that there was little to be regretted in these circumstances. His Ministry had carried two out of its three Irish measures, and he never paused to reflect that the one which was lost was precisely that which was most popular in Ireland; and that one of those which were carried was carried by the sacrifice of that portion of it which his Ministry had been pledged to pass. Lord John did not regard the matter with equal complacency. Yet even he was disposed rather to be thankful for what the Tithe Act did than to regret what it omitted to do. He could write in his old age—

> A measure which changed the collection of tithes from a question between tithe proctor and peasant into a question between landlord and tenant, with a percentage of twenty-five per cent. to the landlord for the cost and trouble of collection . . . was one of immense value to the whole body of small occupiers in Ireland. No measure has tended more to the peaceful progress of Ireland than the Tithe Act of 1838.

No competent critic will deny the truth of this paragraph. Yet no fair critic will omit to reflect that it states only half the truth. The real question for Lord John to decide at the time, and for posterity to determine now, was whether he was justified in abandoning the position which he had formally

laid down in 1835, that no measure on the Irish Church could be satisfactory or final which did not contain an Appropriation Clause.

In answering this question it should be recollected that the circumstances of 1835 differed materially from those of 1838. In 1835 it was the first duty of a Whig leader to obtain the formal disapproval by Parliament of the change of Government in the autumn of 1834.

In 1838 William IV. was dead. The new sovereign was as cordial in her support, as the late King had been suspicious in his distrust, of the Whig Ministers. The country, while it showed itself on the whole favourable to the continuance of the Administration, displayed no desire for the Appropriation Clause. It even showed no disposition to resent the conduct of the Lords; and the question, therefore, for Lord John to consider, was whether he should retire from office while the House of Commons was still willing to give him a majority, or abandon a policy which he had not the least chance of carrying.

Different persons will answer this question in different ways. Without attempting to reply to it in these pages, it may perhaps be as well to point out that the course which Lord John pursued forms an exact parallel to that adopted by his great rival, Sir Robert Peel. Both in 1829 and in 1845 Sir Robert Peel found himself compelled to abandon a policy to which he was pledged, and to promote measures which he had previously opposed. The Conservatives were loud in condemning Sir Robert Peel, just as the Radicals in 1838 were loud in condemning Lord John Russell. The Conservatives have never forgiven their great leader. The Radicals have perhaps only forgiven Lord John because the cause which he abandoned in 1838 was stronger than the strongest statesman: and the disendowment of the Irish Church has made men forget the significance of the famous Appropriation Clause.

For it should never be forgotten that, though the Appropriation Clause was abandoned by its author, time and events have vindicated his prescience. He failed in 1838, not because he was wrong, but because he was before his time.

And the Act which was at last carried in 1869 was a proof that, though 'the people of England never took up warmly the Appropriation Clause, and, indeed, were not persuaded that the Protestant Church in Ireland could be that miserable monopolising minority which Fox had described it to be,'[1] Lord John Russell was right in 1835: and that right, however successfully it may be resisted for a time, will in the end prevail.

[1] *Recollections and Suggestions*, p. 315.

CHAPTER XII.

THE CRISIS OF 1839.

IF the session of 1837–8 was memorable for the abandonment of the Appropriation Clause, it was also remarkable for the vigour and skill with which Lord John fought the battle of his party. It must be recollected that, in a House which was almost evenly divided as to numbers, nearly all the debating power was on the Conservative side. Nothing could be weaker than the Treasury bench in the House of Commons, except perhaps the Treasury bench in the House of Lords. The Duke of Bedford, writing to Lord John on the 24th of August, said—

> It is a very inefficient Government, and, with the exception of yourself, and perhaps Lords Melbourne and Howick, there is not a man amongst them fit to be called a Minister.

The Viceroy on the 28th of July, after a short visit to London, said very much the same thing :—

> It is very unpleasant, even in confidence to you, to say disparaging things of those with whom one has been personally and politically connected. But I really do not think, except you and Melbourne, that there is a single man in the Government for whom, at present, the country cares a straw. . . . You would be quite surprised if I were to enumerate the number of persons who held this language in London while I was last there.

Mr. Sydney Smith used similar language :—

> I only mention Lord John Russell's name so often because . . . he is beyond all comparison the ablest man in the whole Administration ; and to such an extent is he superior that the Government could not exist a moment without him. If the Foreign Secretary were to retire, we should no longer be nibbling ourselves into disgrace on the coast of Spain ; if the amiable Lord Glenelg were to leave us,

we should feel secure in our colonial possessions; if Mr. Spring Rice were to go into holy orders, great would be the joy of the three per cents. A decent, good-looking head of the Government might easily be found in lieu of Viscount Melbourne. But, in five minutes after the departure of Lord John Russell, the whole Whig Government would be dissolved into sparks of Liberality and splinters of Reform.[1]

This weakness of the Government naturally compelled Lord John to make unusual exertions; and, though he was far from well during a great part of the session, he never before spoke so frequently. His extreme followers were, indeed, discontented with the marked moderation of his views. 'Russell is a Whig, Stanley is a Tory, Peel is a Radical,' was the observation of a discerning bystander;[2] and Lord John did not attempt to mitigate the annoyance which the Radicals felt at his opposition to organic Reform by unbending to them in private life. Like Mr. Pitt at the beginning, and Sir Robert Peel in the middle, of the century, he took no pains to win the good-will of his followers. His father wrote to him at the end of the session—

I hear in more quarters than one that there are circumstances in which you are to blame, and in which you give great offence to your followers (or tail) in the House of Commons by not being courteous to them, by treating them superciliously, and *de haut en bas*, by not listening with sufficient patience to their solicitations or remonstrances—or whatever it may be—with many other complaints of that sort. I tell you what I hear with freedom, because I am your father and best friend, and no one else could tell you what I now do.

This extract from the Duke's letter will explain the first Lord Lytton's famous lines:—

> Next, cool and all unconscious of reproach,
> Comes the calm 'Johnny, who upset the coach.'
> How formed to lead, if not too proud to please—
> His fame would fire you, but his manners freeze.

[1] Sydney Smith's *Works*, iii. 100, *note*.

[2] Sir Charles Grey, a man who had held high judicial office in India, who subsequently served on the Special Commission over which Lord Gosford presided in Canada, and who had lately been returned to Parliament. I owe the anecdote to my father, who heard Sir C. Grey give this opinion.

Like or dislike, he does not care a jot:
He wants your vote, but your affections not;
Yet human hearts need sun, as well as oats,
So cold a climate plays the deuce with votes:
And, while his doctrines ripen day by day,
His frost-nipped party pines itself away.

Yet even discontent, though chilled, could admire.

But see our statesman when the steam is on,
And languid Johnny glows to glorious John;
When Hampden's thought, by Falkland's muses dressed,
Lights the pale cheek, and swells the generous breast;
When the pent heart expands the quickening soul,
And, foremost in the van, the wheels of genius roll.

But, if Lord John was cold and distant to his 'tail,' there was no better or brighter companion among the men whose conversation he relished and whose company he loved. And even those who differed from him in politics admitted that the gatherings at Grillion's were hardly complete unless the leader of the Whig party was among them.[1]

[1] Sir Philip Egerton's History of Grillion's contains one or two references to Lord John. Thus, on a Wednesday evening in 1837—a day on which Colonel Thomson had made a formal attack on the Horse Guards, moving that 'the government of the army as at present constituted is against law,' and had failed to obtain a seconder—the annals of the club relate (April 5, 1837): 'Be it remembered that, on this day, immediately after dinner, Sir Robert Inglis proposed the toast of "Church and King," and was seconded by Lord John Russell; the necessity of a seconder having been clearly shown in a previous debate in the House of Commons. On this auspicious event, Sir Robert Inglis called for, and bound himself to drink, a second bottle of port.' A few meetings afterwards the club decided on celebrating its twenty-fifth anniversary by a jubilee dinner (which was ultimately postponed indefinitely in consequence of the King's death). The members present promised many choice dainties for the feast—old wine, fat venison, and other luxuries. But Lord John made the best promise of all—an adjournment of the House of Commons. At these delightful dinners, where fun and good-humour prevailed under the genial sway of Sir Thomas Acland, who, nearly forty years before, had been Lord John's schoolfellow at Sunbury, Lord John and Lord Stanley maintained the warm friendship which they had formed as colleagues in the Administration of Lord Grey. And perhaps, in 1838, though they sat on opposite sides of the table, there were no better friends in the House of Commons. On one occasion in that year, when the House was weary with some difficult detail, Lord Stanley threw a slip of paper across the table to Lord John, 'If you will put it off for three days, Sir Y. Z. has great hopes of an inspiration. It is the only chance I see.—STANLEY. . . .' The Sir Y. Z.'s on either side of the House, equally innocent of inspiration, were

The ordinary embarrassments of a session were increased in 1838 by the course of events in Canada and the conduct of Lord Durham. It will be recollected that Lord Durham had been sent to the colony armed with special and unusual powers. The choice was, in one sense, fortunate. Lord Durham enjoyed the confidence of extreme Liberals, and they were consequently ready to trust him with an authority which they would not readily have conceded to other men. But it was, in another sense, unfortunate. Lord Melbourne underrated Lord Durham's ability, distrusted his judgment, and disliked his views. And Lord Durham himself, before he left England, contrived to give strong proofs of his indiscretion. Lord Melbourne, writing on the 16th of April, said—

> The fact is that this mission is the greatest scrape we have yet got into, and the greatest blunder we have committed.

Lord Durham's indiscretion unhappily did not cease with his departure. On his arrival in Canada he dismissed his predecessor's Council, appointed one composed of his own officers, and persuaded it to issue an ordinance directing that eight Canadians should be transported to Bermuda, and that fifteen others, who had left the colony, should suffer death if they returned to it. He accompanied it with a proclamation conceding a general amnesty to all Canadians except these twenty-three.

News of these proceedings reached England before Parliament was prorogued. Lord Durham's conduct was denounced as illegal in both Houses of Parliament. Lord Brougham introduced and carried a measure to indemnify Lord Durham from the consequences of his actions. Lord

not likely to enter into the fun which their leaders were making at their expense. But little anecdotes of this kind will at least show the relations which existed between the foremost men on the front benches. And, at the very end of the session, Lord Stanley wrote to Lady J. Russell, 'Pray tell Lord John that I wish with all my heart that he could have made up his mind to settle all the Irish questions this year. He shall have all the help we can give him to settle the only one that remains on Monday. But, if Ministers will put off the prorogation till the end of August, how can they expect that even *their best friends* will remain in London? I am sure I would not *if I could help it*, nor would *you* return in October, *would you?*'

Melbourne and Lord Glenelg made only a feeble defence of their agent, and promised to disallow the ordinance which he had issued.

Lord Brougham's Bill reached the Commons in the closing days of a protracted session. The prorogation was too near, the attendance was too small, to make it possible to convert it into a declaratory Act explaining what the objects of Parliament had been; and, as one part of Lord Durham's ordinance, the transportation of criminals to Bermuda, was clearly illegal, Lord John determined to accept the measure. But in doing so he at least showed a capacity to rise to the responsibilities of his position, and a reluctance to abandon an agent placed in a difficult situation. Speaking with great force and clearness, he asserted that Parliament had intended to invest the Governor of Lower Canada with a dictatorship; that the ordinance which Lord Durham had issued, except in a trifling detail, was legal; and that it was impossible to determine its expediency because Parliament was not fully aware of the circumstances under which it had been framed.

> I ask you to pass this Bill of Indemnity, telling you that I shall be prepared when the time comes, not indeed to say that the terms or words of the ordinances passed by the Earl of Durham are altogether to be justified, but that, looking at his conduct as a whole, I shall be ready to take part with him. I shall be ready to bear my share of any responsibility which is to be incurred in these difficult circumstances.[1]

This manly language, so becoming a Minister of the Crown, excited unbounded admiration at the time, and the Speaker hurriedly wrote Lord John the following note on the first scrap of paper that came into his hands:—

> *Private*]
>
> You have done two things. You have made the best speech I ever heard you make, and worthy of a Minister in such difficult circumstances. You have done more than I thought possible to extricate Lord Melbourne from a difficulty of the most painful and serious character; for I never could see how he could reconcile himself to remain in office when he could not defend or protect a person in so very arduous a situation as Lord Durham.

[1] Compressed from *Hansard*, xliv. 1226.

Irritated at the attack which had been made upon him, and at his own virtual abandonment by the Prime Minister and Colonial Secretary, Lord Durham resolved to come home. But in doing so he thus expressed himself on October 12 to Lord John :—

I do not conceal from you that my feelings have been deeply wounded by the conduct of the Ministry. From you, however, and you alone of them all, have I received any cordial support personally ; and I feel, as I have told you in a former letter, very grateful to you.[1]

But, though Lord John's manly conduct had partly restored the credit of the Ministry, he felt that the circumstances of the case made it essential to reconstruct the Administration, and to reassemble Parliament in the autumn. But he shall tell his own story :—

Brighton : October 18, 1838.

My dear Melbourne,—Your letter received this morning contains very important intelligence : that of the illness and approaching end of poor Newport . . . . I have thought for some time that the proper successor to Newport would be Glenelg. To give him a pension on the ground referred to in the Act of Parliament, that he is unable to maintain his rank, you having yourself given him a peerage, seems to me so indefensible as to be impossible. This office gives him a certainty, a secure and honourable retreat ; and his unimpeachable integrity fits him for the situation. Such a step appears requisite at the present moment. The Speaker, Ebrington, and Ellice all say that the opinion of our party is that there must be some change in the *personnel* of the Cabinet. For my part, I can only say I should like to see Morpeth in the Cabinet : and that I never felt in such embarrassment as when last year I had to defend the Canada papers. What Peel said of them was in many instances indisputably true ; and one had only to revert to the bad plea that preceding Tory Governments had done much worse. I am sorry to say this, or to put Glenelg in a painful position, especially at this moment.[2] But some change is, I believe, essential. . . .—Yours ever,

J. R.

[1] Lord John was always generous. He said to Lord Melbourne (October 25), 'I have answered Durham's letter, merely saying that, if I had been in the Lords, I should have done no better than my colleagues there.'

[2] Lord Glenelg had just lost his brother, Sir Robert Grant.

Brighton: October 22, 1838.

My dear Melbourne,—I have been reading Durham's despatches very attentively, and there is one conclusion to which they clearly lead me. It is that, whether he is induced to stay or another person is appointed, it is necessary that Parliament should be assembled before Christmas.

1. You will observe that he refuses altogether to accept and exercise the power which we authorised and advised him to exercise. He proposes to leave the whole of the persons engaged in the late insurrection at large, subject only to the fear of a trial by jury, which he says 'exists only to defeat the ends of justice, and to provoke the righteous scorn and indignation of the community.' He is ready to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act only in case of 'notorious' preparations for insurrection. He tells you he has no reliance on the Government, but must look to the Opposition likewise for a construction of any Act he may pass. In short, he decides, I will not say wilfully, but deliberately, to abridge his power, and leave himself as little means as possible of sustaining the Queen's authority.

2. These doubts and uncertainties have been fairly raised by the conduct of the House of Lords, and of Sir W. Follett in the House of Commons. The Ministry and Lord Durham together might have set them at nought, but the Ministry alone has not force enough to do so.

3. They have been spread throughout the colony, not only by the report of the debates, but by the declaration of Lord Durham that his authority was so *weakened* that he must resign. . . .

4. Both Lord Durham's accounts and those of Mr. Fox speak of fresh preparations for revolt—revolt against an abdicating Governor, and a shaken authority.

All these circumstances together convince me that it is absolutely necessary to call upon Parliament to put some clear and defined sense upon the Act they have passed, to say that the Governor shall have power with his Council to pass laws for keeping suspected persons in custody, and for bringing before an impartial tribunal traitors or murderers, or he shall not. If they confirm the requisite powers, the mischief of Lord Brougham's Bill will be repaired. If they do not, let them be responsible for the refusal and its consequences. . . .—Yours truly,

J. RUSSELL.

Brighton: October 25, 1838.

My dear Melbourne,—I have received Glenelg's despatch. It is mere verbiage, proposing nothing, asking nothing, deciding nothing,

but only leaving the question of Durham's retirement in some manner open. I have been too anxious the last few days to put my ideas well together as to the state of Canada. But yesterday I wrote the enclosed, which you will see is positive and peremptory in regard to our measure, which I think cannot be delayed. . . . If my paper is sent in the form of a separate despatch, I can yield to your opinions not to assemble Parliament. If not, pray summon the Cabinet. I do not well see how I can remain, unless convinced contrary to my present opinion. . . .—Yours truly,

J. RUSSELL.

So stood the matter on October 25. But in the following week an event occurred which gave Lord Glenelg four months more of office, and made the meeting of Parliament impossible. Lady John Russell died at Brighton.

Throughout the summer of 1838 Lady John had been suffering from weakness which her condition did not sufficiently explain. For her sake, in June, Lord John took a house at Petersham in the hope that fresh air might do her good; and with the same object, after the prorogation, he went first to Ryde and then to Brighton, where the Duke of Bedford was staying. He remained at Brighton till September 12, when he was summoned to Windsor. From Windsor he paid a flying visit to Woburn, where he had a little partridge shooting; and from Woburn he went to Ireland with the object of seeing with his own eyes the condition of that country. On his way back from Ireland he was entertained at a public dinner at Liverpool, and was drawn into making a speech which became subsequently a subject for much adverse criticism. From Liverpool he hurried back to rejoin his wife at Brighton; where, on October 21, his second daughter, Lady Victoria Villiers, was born.

Lady John's sister, Miss Lister, was in attendance on the Queen at that time. Her letter will show how the child got its name.

Windsor Castle: Monday, October 22, 1838.

My dear Lord John,—I am so very happy to hear of Adelaide . . . . and I hope you won't mind it being a little Victoria instead of a boy. I am much too happy to think that the wee thing is born safely to care what it is. I heard of it to my great joy yesterday

afternoon, and Lord Melbourne wrote word of it to the Queen. His letter began by telling her this before mentioning anything else. The dear good Queen was so kind about it; sent the Baroness [1] up to me directly with the news; and, when I saw the Queen, she wished me joy so heartily, and said how much pleasure it gave her to be the first to tell me of it: and she added, 'It will be a little Victoria,' and hoped that you were not disappointed that it was a girl.—Ever your affectionate,

H. LISTER.

Unhappily the joy which Lord John and Miss Lister experienced was soon turned into anxiety and sorrow. Lady John was seized with fever; and, though no fatal termination to her illness was anticipated, she became gradually worse, till at last, on November 1, she died.

Frail and delicate as Lady John had always been, her husband had never expected the blow. When the end came, and he found himself alone, he was stunned by the immensity of his loss. The sympathy which poured in upon him from all sides perhaps rather sharpened than mitigated the intensity of his suffering.[2] At first he thought it impossible to continue in public life, or at any rate to remain the leader of the Liberal party. But any idea of his retaining office and of resigning the lead was of course impracticable. As his father put it on November 14—

[1] The Baroness Lehzen, who had been the Queen's governess.

[2] I have neither the right nor the wish to publish the touching letters which were addressed at this time to Lord John both by political friends and by political opponents. But perhaps the following has a public interest which may justify its publication:—

'Lacken: November 22, 1838.

'My dear Lord John,—We are old friends, and this will perhaps plead in my favour, when I claim my forgiveness for intruding on you, to express to you how sincerely and deeply I felt for you when I learned the dreadful loss that befel you. You know that I have some sad experience in these matters, and can therefore better enter into your feelings than many of your gayer friends.

'I trust that your powerful mind will enable you to struggle against the melancholy thoughts and impressions so natural to your bereft state. The eminent position you fill, and in which you may do so much good to your country, will perhaps be the means of drawing your attention some time at least in a direction which may prove beneficial to you.

'With my sincerest good wishes, and sentiments of the highest regard and esteem, I remain ever, my dear Lord John, yours most faithfully,

'LEOPOLD R.'

As long as you are in the House of Commons, and a member of the Cabinet, you and you alone will be the representative of Government in the House. Any other may be nominally the leader, but you must always be so virtually.

The consideration to which his father thus gave expression, the advice of his best friends, as well as the taunts of his least considerate opponents,[1] all combined to influence Lord John. After three weeks' reflection he made up his mind to try to go on. But the advice which he had given for the reconstruction of the Administration and for the summoning of Parliament was necessarily not acted on. No member of the Government would have dreamed of facing the House of Commons without Lord John's assistance; and Lord John, who retired, on his wife's death, to the seclusion of Cassiobury, which Lord Essex placed at his disposal, did not return to London till the middle of January. While his sorrow was still fresh, Lord John forbore from pressing on the Prime Minister the necessity for a change at the Colonial Office. Sir John Newport's recovery made the arrangement which had been suggested for facilitating Lord Glenelg's retirement impracticable; and, though Ministers made an ineffectual attempt to secure Mr. Macaulay's assistance, no further steps towards the reconstruction of the Administration were taken till the session of 1839.

The necessity for strengthening the Colonial Office had in the meanwhile increased. A difficulty, not unlike the Canadian rebellion, was threatening in Jamaica; and at the end of January important Cabinets were held on Colonial policy. At the first of these Cabinets a proposal, which Lord Howick considered inadequate, was made by Lord Glenelg for dealing with the West Indian crisis; the Cabinet arrived at no positive decision upon it; and Lord Howick expressed in strong terms his dissatisfaction to Lord John.

Notwithstanding Lord Howick's remonstrance, the Cabinet —at an adjourned meeting on the 30th of January—adopted

[1] Lord Spencer said very sensibly, 'The more you work, the less you will suffer.' Lord Tavistock wrote on November 21, 'I see that *John Bull* already says that you are likely to take the opportunity of getting out of a public position which has become embarrassing.'

the proposal which Lord Glenelg had laid before it; and Lord Howick, profoundly dissatisfied with this decision, called upon Lord John, and announced to him his intention of retiring from the Ministry, on the ground that there was so wide a difference of opinion between himself and his colleagues that he could no longer remain a member of the Cabinet.

There is high authority for saying that, in a correspondence which subsequently ensued, Lord John prevailed on Lord Howick to promise to withdraw his resignation if the conduct of Colonial affairs could be placed on a more satisfactory footing; and there is equally high authority for adding that, though Lord Howick assented to this suggestion, he subsequently regretted his concession which, he thought, had obscured the true character of the difference between the Cabinet and himself. Lord John, however, plainly saw that the disruption of the Ministry could only be averted by the retirement of Lord Glenelg; and he accordingly wrote to that effect to Lord Melbourne. The nature of the Prime Minister's reply may perhaps be inferred from Lord John's answer to it.

February 2, 1839.

My dear Melbourne,—Your letter[1] obliges me to enter into explanations which I would willingly have kept within my own breast. I haye represented to you for at least a year that I could not feel satisfied with the conduct of our Colonial affairs. At last I reproached myself with the pertinacity of these representations to you. . . . .

However, be it as you please, I shall give in my resignation next week, and state that I thought that the destinies of our Colonial empire could no longer be continued in their present hands without imminent peril; that nothing but the utmost energy and activity are equal to the present emergency; and that, not finding these to exist where they ought to be found, I am compelled to leave office.—Yours,

J. RUSSELL.

Even Lord Melbourne, inclined as he always was to do nothing, could not leave matters alone after the receipt of this

[1] The letter referred to is not among Lord John's papers, nor, as far as I can ascertain, at Panshanger. It was probably destroyed with many others of Lord Melbourne's letters.

letter. He at once promised that Lord Glenelg should be removed; and on the following day Lord John was urging that the terms in which his removal should be conveyed to him should be made as palatable as possible. In Lord Glenelg's place the Ministry decided on appointing the Irish Viceroy. Lord Mulgrave, who, in the previous summer, had become a Marquis and Lord Normanby, had expressed a desire to change his position at Dublin for some suitable office at home. At the same time Sir George Grey, who had been Under-Secretary at the Colonial Office, was made Judge-Advocate; and Mr. Labouchere, who had been Vice-President of the Board of Trade and Master of the Mint, was placed in the second post at the Colonial Office.

These important changes were made at Lord John's suggestion, or, at any rate, with his approval. The crisis, in fact, had brought out his full powers and made him virtually Prime Minister. And perhaps this circumstance suggested another arrangement to Lord Melbourne; for, with Lord John's privity and consent, he wrote at once to Lord Tavistock, and asked him to succeed Lord Normanby in Dublin.

Lord Tavistock, however, had for many years been in weak health, and did not feel himself equal physically or morally to the position; on his refusal the place was conferred on Lord Ebrington, Lord John's old colleague in Devonshire; while Lord Morpeth, who had acted as Chief Secretary for four years, and who had done good service both in his department and in the House of Commons, was admitted to the Cabinet.

These changes, designed to secure efficiency in the Administration, were attended with a further advantage. Most people now would be disposed to think that Lord Normanby had been singularly successful as Viceroy. But in 1838 Tories and Protestants were equally agreed in denouncing his measures and in condemning his clemency. It so happened that two distinct events, at the close of 1838 and the beginning of 1839, increased their exasperation. The magistrates of Tipperary applied for increased protection; and the Viceroy, instead of complying with their prayers, took the opportunity of lecturing them, through Mr.

Drummond, on their duty as landlords, emphasising his advice by the happy phrase that property has its duties as well as its rights. While Irish landlords were resenting this language, an amiable nobleman, Lord Norbury, was unfortunately murdered. The magistrates of Meath, summoned to consider the circumstances of the crime, took the extreme course of appealing from the Government to the Legislature. Lord Roden, making himself their mouthpiece, moved in the House of Lords for a committee to inquire into the state of Ireland since 1835; and, though Lord Melbourne declared that he should regard the success of the motion as a vote of censure on the Government, the Peers granted the inquiry.

A grave crisis had undoubtedly arisen. The Ministers met it in the only manner which would have been becoming in them. They practically appealed from the Lords to the Commons. On the evening which followed the division, Lord John stated that it had become incumbent on him to ask the House to say whether it was prepared to adhere to the principles on which the government of Ireland had been conducted. If the House, he added, considered that other principles should be adopted, 'in that case it will be our duty to relinquish into other hands the government of this country.'[1]

The issue was thus fairly stated; the lists were prepared. Yet the chief champion of the Government hardly desired a victory. Aware that the Radicals had never forgiven him his finality declarations, he had no desire to cling to office, and was ready to surrender the power for which he no longer cared. Mr. Greville, acquainted with his sentiments by an informant, who in his journal is anonymous, urged Sir James Graham to impress on Sir Robert Peel the necessity for moderation; and Lord Tavistock on the eve of the debate gave the same advice to his brother:—

> Peel has been urged to be moderate, and to avoid any sort of intemperance or acrimony which might hereafter be matter of deep regret and serious inconvenience to himself and his party. He kicked at this at first . . . . but he is now prepared to go to the House with two speeches. If he thinks you are disposed to go on with the

[1] *Hansard*, xlvi. 1120.

movement he will let loose, and the debate will be conducted with all the acrimony of a violent party conflict; but he will look vigilantly and attentively for a manifestation of your sentiments in your speech as a test of your future intentions, and act accordingly. . . . I need not preach to you as to what your course ought to be. You have shown upon some great occasions so much discretion, judgment, and moderation, combined with dignity and spirit, that I trust implicitly to your doing so on this.'[1]

This singular negotiation made Lord John's task a very difficult one. But for work such as that which was required of him he had no equal in Parliament. His speech, wrote Mr. Greville—

was admirable, and so skilful that it satisfied his friends, his foes, and did not dissatisfy the Radicals.

The result, too, was more favourable than the Government had ventured on anticipating. On the eve of the debate, Mr. Stanley, the Secretary to the Treasury, sent Lord John an analysis of the probable division, in which he placed the majority at only twelve; the actual majority was nearly twice as large—or twenty-two.

Perhaps no member of the Government cared less for the victory than Lord John. In broken spirits and failing health,[2] he winced under the attacks for which in previous years he had not cared. It so happened that some six weeks before the debate on Irish government, Mr. Duncombe had brought forward a resolution for opening the Westminster Theatres in Lent, which were closed under an order from the Lord Chamberlain. It fell to Lord John's lot to defend the order; and Mr. Duncombe, in replying, declared that

Her Majesty's Ministers might treat public opinion as lightly as they thought proper, but they would at last have to give way, not to public opinion alone, but to public opinion converted perhaps into public indignation, which would sweep them from the benches on which they were now sitting.

The Radicals cheered this language; they cheered still

[1] The account in Greville, 2nd series, i. 184, exactly corresponds with this.

[2] Lady W. Russell, writing from Vienna in May, said that she had heard of Lord John at a dinner at Buckingham Palace so thin and worn and sad that it made her informant unhappy to see him.

louder when Mr. Duncombe, as teller in the division, announced the defeat of the Government. And Lord John, amidst the uproar at his defeat, went home to reflect perhaps in his solitude that political popularity, like domestic happiness, is a fleeting thing; and that the favour of the House, like the applause of a mob, is fickle and vain. He carried his sorrows the next morning to Lord Duncannon, who, a day later, wrote him the following letter:—

Saturday.

My dear John,—Since you spoke to me yesterday I have taken some trouble to inquire, in consequence of what occurred on Thursday evening, what is the feeling of the House of Commons, I mean of those who support us. I am confident there was no real want of kindness towards yourself. You have been long enough in Parliament to know what excitement always takes place on these petty questions, and this in particular has always created great interest, and the announcement of a victory on it produced that ebullition which everybody says was quite disgraceful. Of this, however, I am quite sure, that both in the House and out of it, among even the more Radical, the feeling towards you is much better than it was last year. . . . All that has subsided, and you may be assured that I would not deceive you upon it if I did not know what I say is so.—Truly yours,

D.

To a man, however, who has been swept to victory on a full tide of popular favour, it is sorry comfort to say that 'the feeling towards you is much better than it was last year;' and Lord John continued to brood over the change in his position. On April 13, the Saturday which preceded the debate on the government of Ireland, Lord Tavistock wrote to him—

Whether you were right or wrong in the position which you took up in November 1837, and to which you have since steadily adhered, is not now the question. Having adopted it you cannot now abandon it without loss of character. You are not likely to have taken it up on light grounds, . . . and, your opinions being entertained with the sincerity and force which belongs to a strong and honest mind, it is now your duty to follow them out, be the consequences what they may. It is impossible to disguise from oneself what these consequences may, and I fear must, be: loss of popularity certainly; the weakening and perhaps dissolution of the Whig party in its present

state ; and the disapprobation of friends and colleagues. All this you must be prepared for. In my opinion you can never again become a great popular leader. But what you have done will remain an imperishable record of your public character.

You will probably weather this storm, but, as a popular leader and I fear as a Minister, your days are numbered. You may struggle on for a time, but everything portends a downfall. However, Russell says that he has a superstitious faith in your almost supernatural powers, and that Whiggism, like a spent cannon-ball, is formidable even in its decay. . . .—Always affectionately yours,

T.

Such was Lord Tavistock's opinion on April 13. Yet perhaps to Lord John there was a reflection more galling than that of loss of popularity. No one likes to be misunderstood ; and Lord John, conscious of his own integrity, felt that he was misunderstood. He determined in consequence to take an unusual step. He published a pamphlet, in the shape of a letter to his constituents, on the principles of the Reform Act. None of the numerous works which he ever wrote had a larger or more immediate sale.

A very few sentences from it will unfold its argument :—

The public mind is shaken by disputes and urged by declamation relating to the Reform Act. To that Act, seven years ago, the general and willing consent of the country was given. I wish you to consider whether it is for your interests and for those of the country in general to commence a new agitation for the sake of some new kind of representation. The worst of all legislation for the tradesmen and the farmers is that which disturbs the market and spreads unceasing and undefined alarm. In introducing the Reform Act the organs of the Government declared in the name of that Government that it was intended as the permanent settlement of a great constitutional question.[1] If, after these declarations, any member of Lord Grey's Cabinet were to propose to begin the whole question anew, the obvious remark would be, 'You have either so egregiously deceived us that we cannot trust to your public engagements, or you have so blindly deceived yourself that we cannot believe in the solidity of your new scheme.'

The pamphlet from which these few sentences are taken

[1] The sentence goes on to dispose of the nickname commonly applied to its author at the time—'Without disputing on the words "final measure," still less on "finality," which is no term of theirs or mine,' &c.

was published on May 3. Three editions were sold on the following day. Lord John's friends were full of praise of its moderation and wisdom. But perhaps it is more important to note the judgment of an independent critic. Mr. Greville wrote of it—

> It is very sound and temperate, will be a bitter pill to the Radicals and a source of vexation to his own people, but will be hailed with exceeding satisfaction by all moderate and really conservative men of whatever party.

Unfortunately, the Radicals were the very persons on whom the existence of the Government depended. One of them had already declared this; and a dozen of them were ready to show that the threat was no idle bolt which they were afraid of launching. On the day on which Lord John's pamphlet was published, the Government was compelled, by the conduct of the House of Assembly in Jamaica, to ask the House of Commons to go into a committee on a measure suspending the Constitution of this colony for five years. The House divided on the following Monday, and the Ministers, who had expected a majority of twenty, found themselves in a full House in a majority of only five. The Cabinet met on the following morning; and, conceiving that they no longer enjoyed the degree of confidence which would enable them efficiently to carry on the public business, placed their resignations in her Majesty's hands.

It fell to Lord John's lot to be one of those who communicated the decision of the Cabinet to the Queen. The following was her Majesty's reply :—

> The Queen received this morning Lord John Russell's letter, and she can assure him she never felt more pain than in learning from him yesterday that the Government had determined to resign.
>
> Lord John is well aware, without the Queen's expressing it, how much she was satisfied with the manner in which he performed his duties, which were performed in a manner which has greatly tended to the welfare and prosperity of this country.

But the communication was not confined to writing. Soon afterwards Lord John saw the Queen. The interview was a very painful one to him. In common with Lord Melbourne,

he was warmly attached to her Majesty, and the warmth of his attachment had been increased by the kindness which he had personally received from her during his own heavy sorrow. And there is Mr. Greville's authority for the statement—and Mr. Greville, in all probability, derived his knowledge from Lord Tavistock—that throughout her interview with Lord John the Queen was dissolved in tears. The Ministers, however, had no other course but to explain to her Majesty her duty in the crisis, and the Queen had no option but to send for the leader of the Tory party. It is hardly necessary to relate the well-known sequel. Sir Robert Peel insisted on the removal of the ladies of the household; the Queen objected to this demand, and appealed to her former Ministers to protect her against it; and the Cabinet agreed to support their sovereign and to resume office.

At the present time different opinions are held on Sir Robert Peel's conduct on this occasion. But few people defend the course which the Whig Ministers pursued. Judged at the distance of half a century, it appears to have been bad for themselves and bad for their party. But then perhaps critics of the present day can hardly place themselves in the position of the Ministers of a sovereign who after all was only a girl just emerged from her teens, with no friends and with no advisers but the ladies and gentlemen of whose presence Sir Robert Peel was depriving her. Lord Spencer had perhaps the best judgment of any statesman of his time; and here, in Lord John's words, is what Lord Spencer thought:—

May 12.

My dear Melbourne,—I have seen Spencer, who says that we could not do otherwise than we have done as gentlemen, but that our difficulties with the Radicals are not diminished. . . .—Yours,

J. RUSSELL.[1]

[1] Lord John, it is right to add, took the Queen's side very strongly. So well-informed a correspondent as Mr. Ellice, writing to him on the subject of a conversation with Lord Brougham, in which Lord Brougham had expressed doubts as to Lord John's persevering with the Government, wrote, 'I said he knew very well that you had determined to go on, and were, in fact, as anxious and eager, if not more so, to defend the Queen against the pretensions of the other party than any other member of the Government.'

Lord Ebrington was a warm and consistent Liberal, and Lord Ebrington wrote on the same day from Dublin—

> I cordially agree that you can do no other than stand by her [the Queen] and give the Government another trial.

While the crisis was acute, and Lord John believed that he had escaped from the anxieties and responsibilities of office, he wrote one letter of very great importance. It has already been shown that, on the formation of Lord Melbourne's Government, Lord John, almost through an inadvertence, had been brought into communication with Mr. O'Connell. During the four succeeding years, though no arrangement had been made with the Irish, Mr. O'Connell had undoubtedly given a warm support to men who he could not fail to see were striving, as no Ministry had ever striven before, to do justice to Ireland. Lord John, on his part, could not help distinguishing between the support which he thus received from the Irish brigade and the abuse which English Radicals were perpetually heaping on him. Thus thinking he wrote as follows :—

Whitehall: May 9, 1839.

My dear Sir,—It is a pleasure, which I cannot refuse myself, to acknowledge the constant and disinterested support which you have given to the Ministry in which I held a department chiefly connected with the affairs of Ireland.

I am glad to see that you exhort your countrymen to abstain from acts of violence, and I feel little or no doubt that, although you differ from me with respect to several measures relating to Ireland, you will persevere in refraining to press for Repeal while there is any prospect of equal justice to be obtained by other means.

It is my opinion that there is not, as you sometimes allege, any hostility among the people of England to their fellow subjects in Ireland. But so much pains have been taken to persuade them that the Roman Catholics wish to subvert the Protestant religion that they act in ignorance of the real question in dispute. It has been my anxious wish to diffuse by calm argument more sound ways of thinking on the subject of Ireland, and to oppose freedom of conscience to the religious bigotry of Exeter Hall.—I remain, &c.,

J. RUSSELL.

Daniel O'Connell, Esq., M.P.

Two days after this letter was written the Ministers resumed office. Their return to power afforded them an apparent opportunity of strengthening or reconstructing the Cabinet. But the opportunity was only apparent. Any large rearrangement of offices involved so many fresh elections that both Lord John and Lord Lansdowne were of opinion that it might be necessary to resort to a dissolution of Parliament.

One change, indeed, could not be deferred. Mr. Abercromby had not made an efficient Speaker, and ever since December 1836 he had constantly desired to be relieved from his position. With Lord John's permission he communicated his intentions in confidence to Sir Robert Peel; and it was finally decided that he should announce his resignation to the House in the first week in May. As a matter of fact the announcement was made the very evening on which the decisive division was taken: and during the ensuing recess the Speaker was made Lord Dunfermline. His resignation added to the embarrassments of the Ministry. Mr. Spring Rice had always desired the Chair, and his claims seemed so great that it was impossible to overlook them. But from all quarters information arrived that the Radicals would not support Mr. Rice, and that the only candidate whom the Whigs could carry was Mr. Lefevre. Lord John told Lord Melbourne on May 2 that—

> With Rice's strong feelings on the subject he must be allowed to ascertain his prospects of success. . . . But I wish you would represent to him that if he fails to get support (as I am told from the conversation of Ward and others that he will) he would go into the House of Lords less agreeably than he might do.[1]

How bitterly Mr. Rice felt the conduct of his party may be inferred from the following letter:—

Downing Street: May 8, 1839.

My dear Russell,—I entirely and readily acquiesce in your judgment and Melbourne's; and with many and sincere thanks for the

[1] Lord John, before he received the Speaker's resignation, had suggested to Lord Melbourne that Mr. Rice might receive the Mastership of the Mint and a peerage.

interest you have both of you expressed in my behalf I give you both full authority to take any course you think expedient.

At the same time the difficulties which the personal feelings of others have created only confirm me in my desire to quit Parliament *au plus vite*. . . . To go down after what I consider a humiliation arising out of the hate of the Radicals for the manner in which I have discharged my public duty would be a most painful effort.—Yours very sincerely,

T. Spring Rice.

Lord John was not inclined to abandon his colleague.

May 8, 1839.

My dear Melbourne,—I have received the enclosed letter from Rice. It is very distressing to assist in doing what is so very repugnant to his inclinations. I am disposed to stand by him, and suffer a defeat. However, I wish you would see him and talk to him. I cannot agree to let him go out of Parliament a victim to the Radicals, though I think he ought to acquiesce in the general opinion of the party.—Yours,

J. Russell.

Mr. Spring Rice ultimately agreed to retain his seat in Parliament and the Cabinet till the end of the session; and, to the great advantage of public business in the House of Commons, Mr. Lefevre was chosen Speaker; while Mr. Macaulay re-entered Parliament as Mr. Abercromby's successor at Edinburgh. One other change was made at the same time which more immediately affected Lord John. From the formation of the Ministry, Mr. Charles Gore, a younger brother of the fourth Lord Arran, had acted as his private secretary: on Lord Duncannon's nomination, and with Lord Melbourne's approval, Mr. Gore was now made Commissioner of Woods and Forests; and at the Duke of Bedford's wish Lord John replaced him with his half-brother Lord Edward Russell.[1]

In the meanwhile the resuscitated Ministry had difficulties of an unusual nature before it. Its return to office had not mitigated the indignation of the Radicals, and it had already

[1] At Lord John's request, Lord Melbourne, a little later in the year, offered the vacant bishopric of Lichfield to Lord Wriothesley Russell, Lord Edward's elder brother. Lord Wriothesley declined the offer.

been made manifest that the junction of a dozen of them with the Conservative party might at any moment make the task of government impracticable. It was impossible, therefore, for Ministers to carry out their intention of supporting the Queen without making some concession to their extreme supporters; and the form which these concessions should take had immediately to be settled. Sir H. Fleetwood had given notice of a motion for reducing the franchise in counties to ten pounds; and Mr. Grote had announced his intention of making his annual motion for the ballot. The Cabinet had two distinct questions to consider on these motions. The first of these was the expediency or inexpediency of either project; the second of them was the expediency or inexpediency of making them Government questions. So far as Lord John was concerned he was prepared to give a different answer to the first of these questions in the case of Sir H. Fleetwood and in the case of Mr. Grote. The ballot had been deliberately rejected by Lord Grey, and Lord John considered himself pledged to the arrangement which he had brought forward in Lord Grey's name. But the county franchise had not been settled by Lord Grey. The 50*l.* occupation clause had been carried in the House of Commons by Lord Chandos against Lord John's opposition: and Lord John, and indeed all his family, considered that the Reform Bill had been spoiled by the process. While then he considered his honour pledged to the maintenance of those principles of the Reform Act —such as open voting—for which he was responsible, he equally thought that he was in no way pledged to maintain a franchise which he had personally opposed. The Cabinet agreed with this view, and decided, that Lord John, in declaring that he must resist Sir H. Fleetwood's proposal, should carefully explain that the Cabinet would be prepared to consider it at some future time, as a measure not opposed to the principles of the Reform Act.

Even this decision brought the resuscitated Cabinet to the verge of dissolution. Lord Howick, who arrived late at the meeting, declared that, if Lord John used such language, he would at once rise in his place and express his dissent from it. His colleagues naturally argued that injury would result

to the party and injustice would be done to Lord John if one Cabinet Minister were allowed to answer a declaration of policy which the leader had made in the name of the Government. But, when the House met, it was still uncertain whether Lord Howick would carry out his intention. The embarrassment was averted by the very cautious language which Lord John used. He said that before supporting Sir H. Fleetwood's motion, it would be necessary to ascertain

> the practical effect of such a change with respect to the elections in counties. That is a question with regard to which I am not now able to pronounce an opinion. The inclination of my opinion is that the electoral body would rather be improved than otherwise by such an addition. But I have not sufficient information to enable me to pronounce a decided opinion upon that point.[1]

And Lord Howick, satisfied with this declaration, abstained from speaking.

The Ministry had still to face the more serious ordeal of Mr. Grote's motion. So far as his own vote was concerned, Lord John had no doubt what he should do. But he had serious doubts, which were of no recent origin, as to the propriety of making the ballot a Government question. He was, indeed, of opinion, and so expressed himself on June 12, 1839, that if it were convenient for an Administration to have many open questions it was not 'for their honour and glory.' But convenience is a factor which politicians cannot always afford to disregard; and Lord John in refusing to include the ballot in this category had undoubtedly been guided by Lord Melbourne's judgment rather than by his own. The time had, however, now arrived when it was impossible to carry out Lord Melbourne's wishes any further. The Cabinet contained men in favour of the ballot and men who were opposed to it; and, while those who were in favour of it declared that they must retire if they were not free to vote as they chose, Lord Howick, who was perhaps more opposed to the measure than any other Minister, was in favour of equal freedom. He was wise

[1] *Hansard*, xlvii. 1348. Mr. Greville—which is very unusual with him—seems to have entirely misunderstood Lord John's speech on this occasion (*Memoirs*, pt. ii., 216).

enough to recollect that parties are apt to be moved by their tails, and to foresee that it might be more necessary to secure liberty for the minority to vote with the Tories than for the majority to vote with the Radicals. In consequence, when Mr. Grote's motion was made, Lord John, after restating his objections to secret voting, said—

> When this question came on last year, I fairly and freely confessed that I had exerted all my influence, not only with the members of the Government with whom I was associated, but with many others with whom I was connected by the ties of friendship, to induce them not to vote in favour of the ballot. The only consequence was that we had a division in which 200 members, forming the greater part of those who sit on this side of the House, voted in favour of the proposition of the honourable member for London. I do not think that in consequence . . . I am in the least obliged to abandon my opinion . . . but at the same time I must observe that if I had continued to press my opinions upon my friends in the same manner as before, I think I should be acting most unjustly to those . . . whose opinions I respect and whose conduct I esteem.[1]

The result was very striking: 216 members voted with Mr. Grote, and among the 216 were Mr. Poulett Thomson, the President of the Board of Trade; Sir John Campbell, the Attorney-General; Sir George Grey, who had been just made Judge Advocate-General; Mr. Fox Maule, Lord John's own Under-Secretary at the Home Office; Mr. Scrope, Lord John's colleague at Stroud; his nephew Lord Russell, and his brother Lord Charles Russell; while Mr. Labouchere, who had succeeded Sir G. Grey at the Colonial Office, and Sir J. C. Hobhouse, the President of the Board of Control, absented themselves from the division. No one who reads these and other names in the division list can doubt either the shrewdness of Lord Howick's advice or the necessity of Lord John's concession; and, though many people will think that the Melbourne Administration was wrong in resuming office, everyone will agree that it would have been sheer folly to have strained at the gnat in June after having swallowed the camel in May.

These two divisions practically decided the future of the

[1] *Hansard*, xlviii. 487.

session. It had become plain that the Whigs in resuming office had placed themselves in the precise position which is proverbially reserved for constitutional monarchs. They reigned without governing. The new Jamaica Bill, which they were compelled to introduce, was recast by the Peers. The Irish Municipal Bill, introduced for the fifth time, was amended by the Lords and abandoned by the Commons.[1] Contemporary critics freely commented on the humiliating position of the Ministry. Yet posterity dwells with greater satisfaction on other circumstances. For the Whig Ministry in 1839 gave the country penny postage and laid the foundations of universal education.

The first of these great reforms has no proper place in this biography. The last of them was chiefly and essentially the work of Lord John. Education was no new topic for him. Twenty years before, in advocating Parliamentary Reform, he had dealt incidentally with the subject.

We have been very lately told that education, which ought to be a blessing, has been injurious to the population of manufacturing districts. Sir, the fault is not in education; it is in the time and the circumstances which have accompanied it. Had the people received instruction when they were rich, it would have taught them frugality; had they received political rights at the same time they would have learned the value of legal liberty. But they have received education

[1] The Peers amended the Bill of 1839 by rejecting a clause transferring to the municipalities the powers hitherto exercised by grand juries of levying money. The Speaker held that the amendment was inconsistent with the Commons' privileges. Lord John thereupon circulated the following memorandum:—

'Wilton Crescent: August 9, 1839.

'The question of privilege is an effectual bar to our taking the Bill of the Lords. It would not be right to desert our Speaker after the strong opinion he has expressed.

'But, as it seems to be the wish of the Cabinet, and of the Irish Liberals, to settle this question, we might to-day discharge the order for considering the Lords' amendments, and bring in a new Bill, exactly similar to the Bill of the Lords. So many as are of that opinion say 'Aye, the contrary say No.'

Lord Melbourne, Lord Minto, Lord Morpeth, and Lord Lansdowne replied Aye, with more or less explanation. Lord Cottenham, Lord Duncannon, Lord Normanby, as well as Lord Palmerston, Lord Howick, Mr. Poulett Thomson, Mr. Spring Rice, and Sir John Hobhouse, replied No. And the Bill was, of course, abandoned. The votes of the Cabinet, and the reasons of each member for his vote, are still preserved among the Russell papers.

when they were sinking into poverty, and they have received it without being admitted to political power: they have eaten of the tree of knowledge, like our first parents, only to be conscious of their nakedness.

The statesman who, in his youth, could use this generous language, advocated, in the closing years of his life, the institution of free schools. He was in the van at twenty-seven years of age, and he remained in the front rank at eighty-three.

At the time of the Queen's accession to the throne, the education of the poor was deficient both in quantity and quality. Many populous places had no schools; the schools established in others could not, 'except in language of gross flattery, be characterised otherwise than as pretended schools.'[1] Two great societies, indeed, had been formed to promote the education of the poor. The British and Foreign School Society, formed in 1808 under high patronage, had endeavoured to encourage elementary education, and had included in its course scriptural instruction. The friends of the Church, three years afterwards, founded the National Society, 'to educate the population in the principles of the Established Church.' But, if education were, from its earliest foundations, cursed in this way by the presence of religious differences, it gained the great advantage of religious rivalry. The two societies were supported by persons who cared not one jot for what Mr. Carlyle called 'the mystery of the alphabetic letters,' but who cared mightily for the predominance of their own opinions. Thus National Society and the British and Foreign School Society both flourished; and in 1833 Lord Brougham, who had been a warm friend of education, persuaded the Cabinet to propose, and Parliament to sanction, a grant of 10,000*l.* to each of them.

The question of educating the people after 1833 was not entirely neglected by a Reformed Parliament. But it passed gradually out of the control of the Government. Lord Brougham brought forward a measure on the subject in 1837; and Lord John, from good feeling, and Lord Melbourne, from policy, hesitated to take it out of his hands. But after the

[1] Lord Brougham on December 1, 1837.

session of 1838 it became evident that the question was one which could only be dealt with on the authority of the Government; and, during that melancholy week in which Lord John was watching by his dying wife's bedside, he made up his mind to deal with it.[1] The heads of the scheme which he drew up for the purpose were embodied by him in a letter addressed to Lord Lansdowne as President of the Council and afterwards published in a Parliamentary Paper. They were subsequently explained by Lord John himself in the House of Commons at the commencement of the session. He proposed that the grant of 20,000*l.* should be raised to 30,000*l.*; that a Committee of Privy Council should be formed to superintend the funds voted by Parliament; that a normal school should be established where the young of the Established Church and of various religious sects should be educated together; and that the schools should be inspected by competent persons. The Queen, on his advice, in approving the scheme, expressed her wish that the youth of her kingdom should be religiously brought up, and that the rights of conscience should be respected.

This scheme, so moderate, and in its ultimate effects so beneficial, aroused, in the session in which it was proposed, a storm of abuse. Lord Melbourne, alarmed at the prospect, tried to moderate his colleague's zeal, pointing out to him the examples of men who, without education, had made good their advancement in life, and concluding with his usual question, 'Why not leave it alone?' The Government was compelled to abandon its project of establishing a normal school; but, in Lord John's own words—[2]

The throwing out of one of our children to the wolf did little to

[1] Lord John made his first appearance at the British and Foreign School Society in 1824. He was one of the vice-presidents of the Society from 1824 to 1861, when he succeeded his brother, the Duke of Bedford, as its third president. The Society recorded after his death that, on behalf of his father and brother and in his own right, he occupied the chair on thirty-one anniversaries. Perhaps it ought to be added that on October 2, 1828, he laid the foundation of the Eastern Road Schools at Brighton, which in commemoration of the circumstance were reopened as the Russell Institute in its jubilee year—the year in which Lord John died.

[2] *Recollections and Suggestions*, p. 374.

appease his fury. The violence of bigotry and fanaticism excited the numbers brought together by party hostility. Lord Stanley, in a long and animated speech, proposed to overthrow our whole plan, and to rely upon the Church as the recognised and legitimate teacher of religious and secular knowledge. On a division he was defeated by a majority of five.[1] The grant of 30,000*l.* in a committee of supply was carried by a majority of only two. In the House of Lords the Archbishop of Canterbury carried, by a majority of 111, resolutions condemnatory of our whole scheme. . . . The Bishop of London, Dr. Blomfield, who was sincerely friendly to education, suggested to me that if the State and the Church went on fighting, we should only injure one another, without promoting the great object we both had in view. Seeing the justice of this remark, I agreed to a meeting at Lansdowne House, where the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishops of London and Salisbury met Lord Lansdowne and me. After a conference we agreed to a treaty, of which the principal terms were—that the inspectors of the schools of the National Society should send their reports to the English Bishops as well as to the Committee of Privy Council, and that we should co-operate on the most friendly terms in the great work of education. In this manner the Committee of Privy Council was confirmed, and has lasted till the present year.

Such were the first beginnings of the great work which, gradually extended from year to year, led, thirty years afterwards, to arrangements for the compulsory education of all British people. And perhaps among his many great achievements Lord John never did anything which conferred greater blessings on his country than he accomplished by well and truly laying the foundations of the superstructure which has provided for the comprehensive education of the entire nation.

Yet the present generation may need to be reminded that, during Lord John's tenure of the Home Office, he laid the foundation of another work, which, in its ultimate results, has proved almost equally beneficial, by the formation of a rural police, by the regulation and improvement of prisons, by the better treatment of juvenile offenders, and by the gradual abolition of transportation.[2]

[1] Lord Ebrington wrote on June 26, 'The last division on Education [i.e. on Lord Stanley's amendment] made me as much ashamed of the House of Commons as your admirable speech on the former night made me proud of our leader.'

[2] It may perhaps be added that, stimulated by Mr. Hume's action in Parliament,

And this labour again was no new subject to Lord John. Ten years before he held office, in 1821, he attended a meeting at Exeter Hall summoned to promote improved prison discipline and the reformation of juvenile offenders. In the course of his own speech at this meeting, he said—

> Our country is now about to be distinguished for triumphs the effect of which should be to save and not to destroy. Instead of laying waste the grounds of our enemies, we may begin now to reap a more solid glory in the reform of abuses at home and in spreading happiness through millions of our population.[1]

A bold prediction for any man to have made in 1821. But a prediction which largely owed its fulfilment to the labours of the prophet.

In 1835—his first year at the Home Office—Lord John himself had charge of a measure, which passed almost unnoticed through Parliament, for the better regulation of prisons and for the appointment of inspectors.[2] On August 26, 1836, he wrote to his Under-Secretary, Mr. Fox Maule, that it was high time to improve the state of Newgate; and directed that convicted prisoners, belonging to the metropolitan counties, should be removed to the county gaols; that London prisoners, who had been several years in Newgate, should be sent to a penitentiary; and that the names of all prisoners sentenced to death should be reported to the Home Office, in order that directions might be given for their isolation. In 1837 he largely extended the work which had been commenced by Sir Samuel Romilly, which had been prosecuted by Sir James Mackintosh, and which had been carried on by Sir Robert Peel, of purging the criminal code of many capital offences. In introducing this measure he entered at some length into the question of secondary punishment; and expressed 'a doubt whether transportation ought to be continued as it has been carried on of late years.'[3] In 1838 he introduced and

Lord John in 1835 put pressure on Mr. Sydney Smith and Sir Hussey Vivian to afford facilities for the admission of the public to St. Paul's and the Tower.

[1] Pitman's *Life of Mrs. Fry*, p. 166.

[2] This measure indirectly led to the great privilege case of Stockdale *v.* Hansard. I have not thought it necessary to relate the history of this case in this biography.

[3] *Hansard*, xxxvii. 725.

carried through Parliament the first measure of its kind for establishing a prison, or, as it would now be called, a reformatory, for juvenile offenders; in the same year he directed Colonel (afterwards Sir Joshua) Jebb to inquire into the best situations for penitentiaries in Great Britain, with a view to health, cheapness of construction and food, and facility of discipline. In 1839 he introduced a measure which gave the Secretary of State power over the designs of new prisons or the alterations of old ones;[1] from 1837 to 1839 he served on and presided over a committee which inquired into the whole question of transportation, and whose report paved the way for its gradual abolition; and in 1840, after he left the Home Office, his successor carried out his policy by the construction of a model prison at Pentonville, which was the means of introducing new and improved ideas of prison construction.

Nor were these the only measures which he took during the same period for the prevention of crime. In 1836 he appointed a small commission to inquire into the institution of a county constabulary. In 1839—a year in which, unhappily, great distress prevailed throughout the country—the working classes, organised as Chartists, broke in various places into tumult and disorder. The riot in the Bull Ring at Birmingham was the most formidable of these occurrences; but serious local disturbances took place in many other parts of the country. These unfortunate circumstances indirectly led to a remarkable tribute to the success of the Melbourne Administration. For the first, and for almost the last time in history, Ireland was able to spare troops for the help of England.[2] They led directly to a more permanent reform.

[1] Sir E. Du Cane, *Punishment and Prevention of Crime*, p. 51.

[2] Lord Ebrington wrote on May 1: 'In consequence of the order received by Sir E. Blakeney for two regiments (which will go this evening) I thought it right to ascertain whether his opinion agreed with mine and Drummond's, that you may safely draw on the troops here for further aid if it should be wanted. He has just been with me, and I am happy to say that he fully concurs. I have therefore settled with him to bring another regiment here, so that one may be ready to go over if required at an hour's notice, and should anything take place to demand the temporary services of three or four others he would not feel any more than I should afraid of the present tranquillity of this country being disturbed by their withdrawal.' And again on July 18: 'You may draw upon this place for a further reinforcement without my feeling the least apprehension for the safety

Lord John at once introduced, and succeeded in carrying, a Bill for the constitution of constabulary forces in Manchester and Birmingham; as well as a measure empowering the magistrates in any county to establish a local police.

These various measures for the prevention of crime, for the more rational punishment of the older, and for the reformation of the younger criminals, are perhaps connected by few people with Lord John Russell. Yet no one acquainted with the highest teachings of modern history will doubt either their success or their importance. Sir E. Du Cane writes, in a passage which has already been quoted by the present author in another work, but which will bear quoting again—

> The convict population of Great Britain, with its population of about 15,000,000, then [at the beginning of the present reign] consisted of 43,000 convicts in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land besides others in the penal settlements; the convicts in ten hulks in Great Britain, of which the usual number was stated in 1828 to be 3,000 or 4,000; several hundreds in the penitentiary at Millbank; about 900 (in 1838) at Gibraltar, and probably as many or more at Bermuda: about 50,000 in all. This large number is represented now by less than 9,000 from our population of 27,000,000, to which should be added, say, 2,000 on ticket-of-leave.

He would be a bold man who would ascribe this extraordinary improvement to any one man or any one measure. But he would be a still bolder man who would deny that, foremost among the causes which have operated for good, are the spread of elementary education and the more rational treatment of crime. It is certain that both of these remedies owe more to Lord John Russell than to any other statesman who has filled the office of Secretary of State for the Home Department.

or tranquillity of the country. Drummond and the Attorney-General are quite of this opinion; and Sir E. Blakeney, with whom I have just been talking on the subject, does not dissent with reference to our present state, though, with the prudence of an experienced commander, he claims the return of the loan as soon as the emergency which may call for it is over.'

It is perhaps an even more striking testimony to the success of the Irish administration of Lords Mulgrave and Ebrington, that Lord John, speaking in 1840, said of the Irish, 'The people are as easily governed as any on the face of the globe' (*Hansard*, liv. 213). It would be difficult to name any other leader of the House of Commons in the present century who could have made such an admission.

While, then, earnest politicians are inclined to deplore the easy temperament of Lord Melbourne, and the circumstances under which he persuaded his colleagues to remain in office in 1838, and to resume office in 1839, intelligent critics will at least reflect that his doing so led to the accomplishment of much good both in Ireland and Great Britain. Even the humiliating defeat which the Whig party experienced in 1841 was hardly too high a price to pay for the spread of education and the diminution of crime. These blessings England owes directly to Lord John Russell's administration of the Home Office; they are the enduring monuments of his share in the Government of 1835.[1]

[1] In the thirties, as in later times, police magistrates were occasionally a little too loquacious on the bench. Lord John wrote to Mr. Fox Maule: 'It appears to me that the police magistrates are continually exposing themselves to attack by their very unnecessary custom of making *obiter* remarks from the bench on all that comes before them. . . . There are too many cases where the thing to be complained of is not so much the decision as the practice of chattering for the benefit of the public and the reporters. Would it not be possible to draw up some circular advising moderation and discretion in this respect? If done at all, however, it must be done very civilly.'

CHAPTER XIII.

THE CRISIS OF 1840.

IN May 1839 it was clear that a necessity existed for strengthening the Administration; but it was also evident that the Ministry could not venture to risk the re-elections which its reconstruction would involve. In August changes were easier than they had appeared in May: Sir John Newport's retirement made a vacancy in his office, and Mr. Spring Rice became Lord Monteagle and Controller of the Exchequer. The Governorship of Canada, which was refused by Lord Clarendon and Lord Dunfermline, was conferred on Mr. Poulett Thomson; and two younger men, Mr. Francis Baring and Mr. Labouchere, were promoted, in succession to Mr. Spring Rice and Mr. Thomson to the Cabinet.

These changes did not effect much. It was gradually becoming plain that Lord Normanby was not much more efficient as Colonial Minister than Lord Glenelg; and that it was requisite to place the only strong man in the Cabinet in the post of difficulty and danger. Lord John wrote to Lord Melbourne on July 16—

> If you could manage it, giving Normanby the Admiralty, Minto the Home Office, and me the Colonial would improve the Ministry.

And again on the 19th—

> No one in these days seems disposed to make any sacrifice for the general advantage. Thomson wants to have a peerage before he consents to go to Canada. This will not do. Minto's reply puts an end to that notion [i.e. the notion of Lord Minto taking the Home Office]. Still I believe it will be best that Normanby should change places with me. Without Labouchere I fear he would be at a loss. The Home Office is always more

immediately under your control, and nothing can be done there without your consent.

The change thus suggested was practically announced at the end of the session, and it led, indirectly, to another alteration of importance. During the previous year Lord Howick had differed from his colleagues on many questions of importance. He shared his father's opinions, and Lord Grey disapproved much that Lord Melbourne was doing. He had been on the eve of retiring from the Cabinet on Sir H. Fleetwood's motion. He had disliked the Colonial policy of the Government under Lord Glenelg. He disliked still more the Colonial policy of Lord Normanby. In the course of July, Lord Duncannon, who was in intimate communication with Lord Melbourne and Lord John, suggested that, among other alterations, Lord Howick should be promoted to the Post Office and called to the House of Lords. In the beginning of August, Lord John communicated this proposal to Lord Howick himself, who expressed himself disinclined to leave the House of Commons, but added that he presumed that the offer was part of some larger arrangement with which he was unacquainted. Informed for the first time of the proposed appointment of Mr. Poulett Thomson to Canada and of Lord Normanby to the Home Office, he complained of Lord Melbourne's want of confidence in concealing these arrangements from him. He considered that the character of the Administration was changed, and not improved, by these appointments; and he doubted, for many reasons, the expediency of Lord Normanby's appointment to the Home Office; and the possibility of Lord John undertaking the complicated duties of the Colonial Department while discharging the business of a leader of the House of Commons. So thinking, he made up his mind to retire,[1] and, though Lord John personally endeavoured to shake his conclusion, he failed to make any impression on him. With Lord Howick, his brother-in-law, Mr. Charles Wood, left the Administration.

The Prime Minister took Lord Howick's resignation with easy indifference. Lord John, on the contrary, was un-

[1] Lord Howick's reasons for resigning have never previously been stated.

affectedly sorry at his separation from an old colleague. He told Lord Melbourne, on the 29th of August, that he thought that Lord Howick should have heard earlier about Mr Thomson's appointment, and that he had been under the impression that he knew it. He added on the 31st that he could not say how sorry he was about Howick, and that he should try to keep friends with him. Regret, however, could not repair the evil. All that the Ministry could do was to fill up the vacant places as well as they could; and, with Lord John's consent, the office of Secretary at War was conferred on Mr. Macaulay, while Lord Clarendon was simultaneously admitted to the Cabinet as Lord Privy Seal.

Before these arrangements were concluded Lord John had formally entered on his new duties at the Colonial Office. A Secretary of State is theoretically able to discharge the duties of his brother Secretaries, and the change involved neither re-election nor any more formal proceeding than walking into the Colonial Office, carrying with him the seals he had held as Home Secretary. The Under-Secretaryship of the Colonies was filled at that time by Sir James Stephen, one of the most remarkable men who have held high permanent office under the Crown; while Sir Henry Taylor, the author of 'Philip van Artevelde,' was serving in the ranks of the department. However distant and cold Lord John may have been with his supporters, he was always on easy terms with men of capacity. Sir H. Taylor wrote to Mr. Edward Villiers—

> You once asked me how Stephen and I liked Lord John's way of doing business. Very much. Very different from anything before him.[1]

[1] Sir H. Taylor's Autobiography, i. 265. Sir J. Stephen wrote to Lord John in December, 1839, with reference to an attack of Mr. Croker's in the *Quarterly*: 'I must be prepared to pay the penalties for the situation I hold. As to such as are exacted of me by the *Quarterly Review*, I am not very anxious about them. It is utterly idle to attempt, in public life, to overtake calumny even when a man holds a substantial position with a right of self-defence. When, as in my case, the nature of his office is such as to make self-vindication impossible, without a direct breach of honour to those whom one serves, all that can be done is to expel from the memory, or at least from the recollection, the fact that such censures are

Writing in 1840, Lady Holland said—

You bewitch by your frankness and courtesy several Tories who go officially to you. For instance, Lord Harewood declares he cannot trust himself, as he returns from each interview so *won*, that he fears he will not be able to continue his hostility. You judged well in your choice of an office, unless it half kills you from fatigue.

Mr. Burge, the agent for Jamaica, thus testified to Lord John's capacity :—

Lord John Russell is by far the best Secretary of State we ever had to deal with.[1]

Mr. Greville wrote in stronger language :—

His reputation in his office is immense, where all his subordinates admit that colonial affairs were never so well administered.[2]

Mr. Ellice said in the House of Commons in 1845—

It is scarcely possible to speak with temper of the weak and inconsistent measures of the department from the very outset of this transaction. The only lucid interval in the management appears to have been when my noble friend the member for the City of London held the seals. He dealt with the strange treaty of Waitangi and with the concerns of the New Zealand Company according to the plain rules of common sense.[3]

Mr. Ellice was a friend and a Whig. But, in the same debate, Mr. Colquhoun, the member for Newcastle-under-Lyme, a Conservative and an opponent, said—

I have looked through the colonial despatches for a long series of years. I have had access, of which I have taken advantage, to the opinions and information of parties having a personal stake in several of our colonies. Both sources have led me to this opinion, that there has been no period during the last quarter of a century in which the

published. Or, if the remembrance of them will force itself on the mind, to remember also how utterly insignificant to society at large, with very few exceptions, each component member of society is. The difficulty of achieving permanent fame is counterpoised by a corresponding difficulty in attaining to permanent or wide-spread ignominy. In such cases as this, the accuser, the accused, and the accusation are all travelling with railway speed to oblivion.'

[1] Greville, *Memoirs*, 2nd series, i. 255.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 293.

[3] *Hansard*, lxxxi. 864. Mr. Ellice is better known as 'Bear Ellice.'

affairs of the Colonial department have been conducted with greater vigour, higher administrative wisdom and justice, than during the administration of the noble Lord the member for the City of London. It is the essence of our colonial system that the Secretary of State is in his administration supreme. What he does, he does unchecked by public opinion. . . . And, if we are to have a despotism, I am not sure that we can find one better fitted for such power than the noble Lord opposite. . . . He possesses great talents; a judgment clear, prompt, and undisturbed by passion; a will which is inflexible; an eye quick to discern the evil; a genius ready to apply the remedy.[1]

Lord John himself wrote—

I soon became interested in colonial affairs,

New Zealand dates its origin as a colony from his tenure of the Colonial Office, and the colonists were assured that they might depend on the protection of the Crown.

I gave still stronger assurances to the British Provinces of North America, pledging to them the word of the Queen that, so long as they desired to remain her subjects, they should receive the support of the Crown and be defended as a part of the British dominions.

He held the same high language in other quarters :—

During my tenure of the Colonial Office, a gentleman attached to the French Government called upon me. He asked me how much of Australia was claimed as the dominion of Great Britain. I answered 'The whole;' and with that answer he went away.[2]

And in his great speech on colonial policy in 1850, which was subsequently republished as a pamphlet, in which he reviewed the whole history of the acquisition, regulation, and expansion of the colonial empire, he used equally firm language :—

I consider it to be our bounden duty to maintain the colonies which have been placed under our charge. I think we cannot get rid of the obligation and responsibility to govern these colonies for

[1] *Hansard*, lxxxi. 903.

[2] *Recollections and Suggestions*, 198–203. It ought perhaps to be added that Mr. Rusden, *History of Australia*, ii. 5, *note*, says that the claim had been made in fact by Lord Liverpool's Administration, and that all that Lord John did was to make it in words.

their benefit, and I trust that we may be the instruments of improving and civilising those portions of the world in which they are situated. . . . I anticipate, indeed, with others that some of the colonies may so grow in population and wealth that they may say 'Our strength is sufficient to enable us to be independent of England. The link is now become onerous to us: the time is come when we think we can, in amity and alliance with England, maintain our independence.' I do not think that that time is yet approaching. But let us make them as far as possible fit to govern themselves; let us give them, as far as we can, the capacity of ruling their own affairs; let them increase in wealth and population; and, whatever may happen, we of this great empire shall have the consolation of saying that we have contributed to the happiness of the world.[1]

The details of Lord John's colonial administration, however, form part of the history of the British Empire, and cannot be included in a personal biography. At the close of the session Lord John went down with his children and step-children to Buckhurst, on the borders of Windsor Forest, where he remained in a house which he had hired for the rest of the autumn. While he was at Buckhurst, almost on the anniversary of his wife's death, he learned the distressing news that his father had been seized in Scotland with a fit of apoplexy and was lying in a state which made his recovery hopeless. A few days later still he received intelligence of his father's death. In one sense there was some mercy even in the stroke. Years had passed since the Duke had suffered his first seizure. His family had received ample warning of the probable end. As Lord Holland wrote to Lord John—

> In reason one should feel thankful that what was so probable and so long foreseen should have been so long and so happily postponed by skill, kindness, and attention

Lord John remained at Buckhurst till November. In that month he took children and step-children to the sea at Bourne, where he left them in his sister-in-law, Miss Lister's, charge, and himself returned to his duties in London. In December he was persuaded by Lord Lansdowne to come with his eldest step-child and his eldest daughter and spend his Christmas

[1] *Speech on Colonial Policy*, 1850, pp. 17 and 54.

at Bowood; and it was during this visit that he took the children over with him to Sloperton to see his old and attached friend Mr. Moore, who wrote in his diary—

> Nothing can be more touching than to see him with these children, and he has them always with him.

On the occasions when the children were necessarily separated from him, he was constantly writing to them; and, though his own letters have probably long since perished, their letters from country and seaside have been preserved with a care which was not always paid to more important correspondence.

Lord John returned to Buckhurst at the end of December. Only a fortnight of his holiday was still left to him, for Parliament was summoned to meet at an unusually early date to consider the arrangements necessary on the Queen's marriage with Prince Albert. At the opening of the session Sir John Yarde Buller moved a vote of want of confidence in the Administration; and, in speaking on the motion, Sir James Graham charged Lord John with having encouraged Chartism by declaring at the Liverpool dinner in October 1838 that public meetings were not only lawful but commendable; and by appointing Mr. Frost (who had led the unfortunate attack on the Westgate Hotel at Newport) a magistrate of Monmouth, and Mr. Muntz, who held advanced political opinions, a magistrate in Birmingham.[1] Lord John had a complete and satisfactory answer to both charges:—

> When the name of Mr. Frost was proposed for the magistracy, immediate reference was made to the Lord Lieutenant of the county, who returned for answer that he considered Mr. Frost to be a fit and proper person to be so appointed. . . . The right hon. gentleman, in his very acrimonious speech, complained also that a gentleman of the name of Muntz has been placed on the commission of the peace. . . . I have heard but one opinion of Mr. Muntz, which is, that that gentleman has well, ably, unflinchingly, and impartially discharged his duties as a magistrate.

As for his speech at Liverpool, no reporters had been

[1] The charge was stale. It had been first brought by Sir Robert Peel in the debate on the Address in 1839.

present at the dinner; and the gentleman who had furnished the newspapers with a report from memory had made Lord John say that it was inadvisable to interfere with public meetings; but had omitted to add that Lord John had qualified 'his statement with the words, "so long as there shall be no infraction of the law."'[1]

Thus the personal charge against the Minister hopelessly failed. The majority was indisposed to sanction the case against the Administration. When Lord John sat down at half-past four o'clock in the morning the House divided; and the Government found itself in a majority of 308 votes to 287.[2]

This division strengthened the position of the Government: and though, before the House separated for Easter, Ministers had to face a more formidable motion of Sir James Graham censuring their Chinese policy, they were able to win a second victory.[3] A few days afterwards Parliament adjourned for a fortnight, and Lord John joined the children at Buckhurst. He left them at the close of his holiday, on April 28, to take his seat in the House on the 29th. On that day he supported by his vote a measure introduced by Sir E. Wilmot for the more rational treatment of juvenile offenders. But his thoughts were probably busy with purer and happier children than those for whom Sir E. Wilmot was pleading. For the morning on which he had left Buckhurst was the young Lord Ribblesdale's birthday, and the day was therefore a red-letter day in the Russell-Lister calendar. So the children had had tea and dessert and lemonade in the garden before the great red screen, which was ornamented with branches of fruit and flowers; and the gardener had made a beautiful crown of flowers and leaves, just like a Jack-in-the-green; and the children had drunk Lord John's health and Tommy's health, and the Queen's and Prince Albert's health; and the servants had come out, and Charles with his fiddle,

[1] *Hansard*, li. 1058.

[2] Mr. Greville says that Lord John, considering he rose at three in the morning, when he and the House must have been pretty well exhausted, made a very good and honourable speech (2nd series, i. 264).

[3] By 271 votes to 262.

and they had danced country dances and reels of all kinds on the lawn ; and little Ta had crawled about everywhere, and when she was asked where her father was, had shaken her little head and said 'All done.'[1]

The session of 1840 is not remarkable for any great legislation, though a long controversy was at length terminated by the passage of a measure of Municipal Reform for Ireland. Much of the time of Parliament was occupied by the long and dull debates on privilege, throughout which Sir Robert Peel fought on the side of Lord John, and in doing so offended his own followers, and decreased his own chances of office by creating differences among his supporters. These circumstances all tended to strengthen the position of the Government. But the Whigs owed more throughout the session of 1840 to the conduct of their leader than to the divisions of their opponents.

At the end of the session Sir Robert Inglis said to one of the Government people, 'Well, you have managed to get through the session very successfully.' 'Yes,' said the other, 'thanks to your dissensions among yourselves.' 'No,' said Sir Robert, 'it is not that, but it is the conduct of your leader, his honesty, courage, and ability, which has enabled you to do so.' Ley, the Clerk of the House of Commons, and a man of great experience, said he had never seen the business so well conducted as by John Russell.[2]

Yet, if in domestic matters the position of the Ministry was improved, there was ample room for apprehension abroad. In the East, the Opium War was beginning ; and a British army, doomed unfortunately to disaster, was encamped at Cabul ; in America, a dispute on the boundary line between the United States and the British possessions was being conducted with increasing bitterness ; while in Europe a quadruple alliance had isolated France, and was creating apprehensions of war. But Lord John was too happy at the prospects of release from Parliament to feel much uneasiness.

[1] I have taken these extracts from a letter of Miss Lister's (Mrs. Maurice Drummond). Tommy was Lord Ribblesdale. Little Ta grew up to be Lady Victoria Villiers.

[2] Greville, 2nd series, i. 293.

On the 1st of August, the Prime Minister received from him some—

BELLMAN RHYMES

On the state of the times,
Which are, heaven knows,
Two serious for prose.

The Chinese at Canton
Prodigiously rant on :
There may be some use in
Our capturing Schusan :
But, while we are wreaking
Our vengeance at Pekin,
We're sadly at sea
For Souchong and Bohea.

. . . .

Our prospects in Turkey
Are lowering and murky :
The Frenchmen will task us
With thoughts of Damascus.

And so on for forty or fifty lines.

The session closed on August 11 ; and Lord John sent the four younger children to Ramsgate. The two elder children, with their aunt, Miss Lister, he took with him on a much longer journey. His colleague Lord Minto, at whose house at Putney he had been a constant visitor during the year, persuaded him to pay him a visit at Minto after the close of the session. He went down to the North about the middle of August ; and, after visiting Lord Morpeth at Naworth, and the Duchess of Buccleuch at Drumlanrig, arrived at Minto towards the end of the month.[1]

Lord John was not able to protract his stay at Minto beyond the 1st of September. Miss Lister and the children, however, remained behind, and when Lord John left he was

[1] Sir James Graham wrote to him from Netherby on the 23rd : 'I returned home from the moors yesterday evening, and I have heard by chance this afternoon that you pass through Longtown to-morrow. I cannot resist the natural impulse of asking you to come here. . . . You will find no one excepting Stanley, and he goes on Tuesday morning : and we will to-morrow evening either settle the French war and the fate of Mehemet Ali, or talk only of the olden time, exactly as you like best.'

uncertain whether he would return for them or not. For at Minto there was a fresh centre both for his hopes and for his fears. Lady Fanny Elliot, Lord Minto's second daughter, had seen only half as many summers as he numbered years; she was young enough, as the phrase goes, to be his child; and, while he felt that in her society he might find solace for his sorrows, he dared not think that one so young would throw herself away 'on a person of broken spirits, and worn out by time and trouble.' His own lot was 'constant and laborious attention to public business, and a wretched sense of misery, which even the children can never long drive away.' And so, without a murmur, and a prayer that his life might not be long, he accepted his 'duty' and his 'portion,' and bade Miss Lister join him with the children at Woburn.

What he felt and what he was, may perhaps be inferred from Miss Lister's answer :—

September 9, 1840.

My dear Lord John,—Sad as your letters are, it is still a relief to have them. I *will* hope for you though you cannot for yourself. At least in one way you *must* be happy. Such conduct and feeling as yours must meet with a reward even in this world. I cannot thank you as I wish and feel for all you are with regard to the children, for all you have been to them. I never can think of it without tears of gratitude. We *all* feel it, we often talk of it together. Sometimes, because I cannot speak of it to you, I feel as if you must think us ungrateful or unmindful of it. You have been more than even an own father could have been. And by your example—an example of all that is good and pure and great in mind and conduct—you are doing for them, unconsciously, more than any other teaching can do. In what I say now I am only expressing what my brother and Theresa have often expressed to me. It is only that I feel I may say it now; and I hope that you will find comfort in the consciousness of all you are to those who have you alone to look to . . . . —Your affectionate,

H. Lister.

There were, moreover, public reasons of high importance for Lord John's immediate return to London. Though the Cabinet was already scattered, events were marching with railway speed; and the country was suddenly awakened to the

knowledge that war, and the worst of all wars, war with France, was not merely probable but imminent.

The condition of the Ottoman Empire has been the unhappy cause of much evil during the present century; and from 1833 to 1839 the Government of the Porte was threatened with a serious danger. In the first of these years the army of Mehemet Ali, the Pasha of Egypt, had conquered Syria, entered Asia Minor, and had only been arrested in its advance on the Bosphorus by the intervention of Russia. In the last of them a Turkish army had been completely defeated by an Egyptian force under Ibrahim; the Turkish fleet had been carried into Alexandria by its admiral; and the Sultan had died—perhaps been murdered—in the crisis. These events led to the negotiations which ultimately culminated in the famous treaty of July 15, 1840, under which four of the great European powers, Great Britain, Austria, Russia, and Prussia, undertook to settle the terms on which hostilities between Egyptians and Turks should cease, and to use force to give effect to them. France, which was disposed to regard the cause of Mehemet with sympathy, was left out of the arrangement.

This treaty produced some differences in the Whig Cabinet. Its conclusion was opposed by Lord Holland and Lord Clarendon; and perhaps it would never have been signed at all if Lord Palmerston had not made his own continuance in office dependent on its signature, and if Lord John[1] had not warmly supported the Foreign Minister.

France naturally resented the isolation to which the Treaty of July condemned her. Her King, her statesmen, and her journals angrily talked of war, and vigorous efforts were made to strengthen the French fleet. Under these circumstances the Prime Minister asked Lord John to confer with the Duke of Wellington on the subject of military force in the Mediterranean. The Duke approved the course, which Lord John proposed to take, of strengthening the British garrisons by two regiments. 'But then,' he said, 'you must keep on an

[1] Lord Palmerston himself wrote on December 4, 1840, to Lord John: 'I think you must feel gratified at recollecting that it was your support of the Treaty of July which chiefly induced the Cabinet to adopt it.' *Vide infra*, p. 362.

equality, or nearly on an equality, by sea. . . . However, the great object is to keep the peace of the world.' This object, the Duke thought, could best be gained by asking the French for a *contre-projet*. 'If their proposal agrees nearly with yours, then you may understand one another; if, on the other hand, they refuse any *contre-projet*, it is they who break up the alliance, and not you.'[1]

One portion of the Duke's advice was adopted. Lord Minto and Lord Palmerston busied themselves with strengthening the Mediterranean fleet. But these preparations for war only increased the general alarm. Before Lord John left London, he received through the Duke of Bedford the following letter from Mr. Ellice:—

I came away very unhappy at the present aspect of public affairs . . . . both with regard to its own merits and its bearing on our connection with France . . . . Now, when there is no longer a Turkish Empire, we engage in a crusade to destroy the remaining half of the Mussulman power. Of course this suits Russia, who cares little which part is first destroyed, so that the whole may be in the end scattered to the winds. [As for France] we have the first Government in France honest to an English alliance . . . . and this is the moment we choose for casting them off and re-attaching ourselves to the Holy Alliance.

And, soon after his arrival at Minto, Lord John received a much more important document forwarded to him by his brother:—

Wiseton: August 25, 1840.

My dear Tavistock,—I am very glad you are pleased and satisfied with the state of our foreign affairs. It is a good deal more than I am. I have been and am fully prepared to support Melbourne's Government to any length short of absolute criminality. But I should consider myself atrociously criminal if I supported them in any war which was not strictly and absolutely necessary. Now no war for the purpose of driving the Egyptians out of Syria can be anything like necessary. I am glad, however, that you are satisfied, because I feel almost confident you would not be satisfied unless Palmerston had proved to you that there was no danger of war . . . . Still I cannot imagine what can have induced Palmerston to abandon the French alliance, by which we have hitherto preserved the peace of

[1] From a memorandum of the conversation made by Lord John.

Europe, and to connect us with the Holy Alliance . . . . I am no advocate for truckling to France ; but surely there is no truckling in keeping friends with the nation in Europe most fitted to be our friends by situation, institutions, and civilisation.—Yours most truly,

SPENCER.[1]

Ruminating over this letter from the man whose judgment he valued above that of any other of his contemporaries, Lord John turned from Minto and pleasure, and came to London and duty. He dined at Holland House on September 8, meeting Lord Clarendon and M. Guizot, and the conversation at that table was not likely to diminish the impression which Lord Spencer's letter had already made. He found, too, that Lord Melbourne himself shared his own apprehensions, and declared that 'he could neither eat, nor drink, nor sleep, so great was his disturbance.'[2]

It was under these circumstances that Lord John determined on making a great effort to terminate an embarrassing crisis ; and, after much consideration, he drew up a memorandum, which he sent to the Prime Minister from Windsor, where he had gone in obedience to the Queen's commands :—

Windsor Castle : September 10, 1840.

My dear Melbourne,—I send you an outline of the propositions I have to make.

I have felt for a long time the serious responsibility we incur. The result of various and many reflections I now send you : and if they are not adopted I do not feel justified in taking my share of responsibility any longer.—Yours truly,

J. RUSSELL.

The enclosure was as follows :—

September 10, 1840.

In the present state of things great danger of European war exists. Two of the chances in our favour have been decided by events against us. Mehemet Ali has refused the offer of the allies : the Syrian revolt has been quelled.

With respect to the future, if we confine ourselves to blockade, and the occupation of points on the coast by a few hundred marines,

[1] This, of course, is the letter referred to in Greville, part 2, vol. i. p. 304. Mr. Greville, however, evidently did not know how very strong Lord Spencer's expressions were.

[2] *Ibid.* 303.

success must be doubtful, and is at all events not likely to be speedy. If we adopt stronger measures, ... we excite the interference of France. In order to preserve the general peace, therefore, I propose—

1. That some person of distinguished military or naval character should be sent on a special mission to Constantinople, and be instructed to give the most temperate advice to the Sultan, and have power to stop any needless effusion of blood on the coast of Syria.

2. That M. Guizot should be informed that it is the opinion of her Majesty's Government that hostilities cannot be long carried on upon the coast of Syria, or assume a grave character either in Syria or Egypt, without inviting France to concert measures with the other powers calculated to preserve the peace of Europe. That the allied powers cannot abandon the Treaty of July; that, on the other hand, France cannot be expected to join in that treaty. But that a cessation of hostilities might take place under a provisional arrangement as between Holland and Belgium after the capture of Antwerp. That, if France be willing to concur in the principle of such an arrangement, it will be desirable that a proposition of this nature should be prepared for the consideration of the four powers, parties to the Treaty of July.

It was the custom of Lord Melbourne to do nothing in difficulty. He hesitated to adopt Lord John's proposal.

Woburn Abbey: September 15, 1840.

My dear Melbourne,—I find my brother is clearly of opinion that I ought not to yield my opinion on so vital a matter.

I wish, therefore, you would prepare the Queen for my resignation.—Yours truly,

J. RUSSELL.

But Lord Melbourne, with the fear of the Foreign Secretary, who the year before had become his brother-in-law, before his eyes, did not yield; and wrote deprecating a step which would break up the Government. Lord John replied—

Woburn Abbey: September 17, 1840.

My dear Melbourne,—I agree with you in the necessity of well considering any proposal which may have the effect of breaking up the Government. But, in the first place, I know not why what I propose should do so, unless it is to be laid down that one member of the Cabinet is to conduct matters simply as he pleases without

concert or control. But next, if war can be avoided, there is no comparison between the benefit thus gained and the advantage of keeping the Government together.

However, this I think cannot be denied me—that the Cabinet should be called together to consult on the critical state of affairs. I shall be ready to discuss them soberly and calmly, and to listen to any views however opposed to mine. But to have every proposal at once rejected is more than I believe anyone in my situation ever bore, and I will not set the example. . . .—Yours ever,

J. RUSSELL.

The resolution which Lord John thus formed was probably much strengthened by two fresh letters which he received from Lord Spencer. In the first of them, written on the 20th of September, Lord Spencer said—

I think that there is nothing that Syria can be estimated at, which ought to have induced us to make a treaty with Russia, Austria, and Prussia to which France is not a party; because Syria is not worth a continental war in which we should be engaged against France. . . . There are, as I have said, difficulties and dangers, from the apprehension of which the agreement in opinion of you and Melbourne does not at all relieve my mind, because there are things done which cannot be undone. But, for your future conduct, you and he perfectly agreeing must be very satisfactory, because Palmerston must give way to you: and, should he not, though I for one should be extremely sorry to see him quit your Administration, his doing so would have no effect whatever either on Parliament or on the country. I hope, therefore, that you will be stout and make him do everything possible to remedy the mischief which has already been done, by conciliating France as much as possible, and by showing that our great object is to keep on cordial terms with her.

Three days later, he wrote again:—

Now as to your resigning, it does not appear to me that you can be driven to this. . . . There is no doubt that it would be the bounden duty of any man to resign if he found the Cabinet of which he was a member going to involve the country in a war which could be avoided. But I think I know the opinion of nearly all the members of your Cabinet well enough to be quite sure that they will be quite as desirous to avoid war as you and I are. Palmerston undoubtedly may have so involved himself that it may be difficult for

him to alter the course which he wishes to follow without discredit. But I should not think this likely, and I hope it is not so. But, even if it is, Palmerston, as I said in my last letter, stands, if not quite, nearly alone; and, though the decision of the Cabinet against him might make him feel it necessary to resign, even that would have no effect whatever upon the stability of the Administration.

It was a far journey from Lord Spencer to Mr. Hume. But, on September 26, Mr. Hume made a strong appeal to Lord John to use his influence in the Cabinet to stay 'the hand of the destroyer, and to prevent the war which seems inevitable if the British Cabinet do not agree to the modified treaty which, we are informed, will be submitted to-morrow for your consideration.'

In the meanwhile the march of events necessitated a slight modification in Lord John's policy. M. Thiers had sent a special mission, of which M. Walewski was the chief member, to Alexandria; and M. Walewski had succeeded in inducing Mehemet to moderate his demands; and to confine them to the hereditary government of Egypt for himself and family, together with the government of Tripoli, Damascus, and Aleppo during his own life and his son's. On September 18 M. Thiers informed Mr. Bulwer, the Secretary of Legation at Paris, of this arrangement, adding that M. Walewski had carried it to Constantinople with the view of obtaining the Turks' assent to it.

Woburn Abbey: September 26, 1840.

My dear Melbourne,— . . . The whole aspect of affairs is changed by the language of Thiers on the 18th. We have now to deal, not with the Pasha, but with the Pasha and France. . . . I have told Palmerston I think we ought in conference to tell our allies we are ready to accept Walewski's conditions, provided they (the allies) agree, and the Syrian insurgents have security against vengeance.

If you and Palmerston are against this I had much better retire. The course will be simple enough. If Palmerston succeeds without war, he has the triumph justly due to him. If war is impending, I shall be in a position to oppose, and I think to prevent it. The Whig party, I think, would be with me in such a case.— Yours,

J. RUSSELL.

Thus, almost to the eve of the meeting of the Cabinet,

everything pointed to the immediate abandonment of the high-handed policy on which Lord Palmerston had resolved. Yet the result was very different, and, without the explanation which Lord John's private correspondence affords, is almost unintelligible.

Two circumstances combined to paralyse Lord John's action.

In the first place, news arrived in London that Lord Ponsonby, the British Ambassador at the Porte, had taken upon himself to advise the Sultan to reject the terms which M. Walewski was offering; and Lord Melbourne thought that their rejection altered the situation. Such was not Lord John's opinion:—

Wilton Crescent: September 27, 1840.

My dear Melbourne,—I am very sorry not to agree with you; but I confess I am unable to yield to your arguments.

If Lord Ponsonby has taken upon himself to advise the Sultan to reject the proposition of Mehemet Ali without reference to the allies, Lord P. is highly criminal, and ought to be disavowed.

I cannot see there is anything humiliating in declaring our readiness to accept terms which are much more favourable to the independence and integrity of the Turkish Empire than the original treaty. . . .

I feel satisfied that, by pursuing my present course, I shall prevent war with France; and that, if I do not take it, I shall have to defend in the House of Commons the policy I think most injurious to England and destructive to the peace of the world.—Yours faithfully,

J. RUSSELL.

In the next place, a still stronger pressure was to be placed on Lord John than the disinclination of the Prime Minister to thwart the Foreign Secretary. Lord John had hardly written his letter when he received the following note from Lord Melbourne:—

[W[indsor] C[astle]: September 26, 1840.

. . . For God's sake do not bring on a crisis; the Queen could not really go through that now, and it might make her seriously ill if she were to be kept in a state of agitation and excitement if crisis were to come on. . . . She wishes you think all [*sic*] of this and the consequences it might cause not only to me [? her], but to

all Europe, as it would show our weakness in a way that would be seriously injurious to the country.[1]

Lord John at once replied—

September 27, 1840.

I am very sorry for the painful situation of the Queen. Lord Spencer, who urges me to be firm, says that if we go to war we shall be at once overthrown in the House of Commons, and the only way of maintaining the Ministry is to maintain peace. I wish you would see the matter in this light.

I will call upon you in South Street at two o'clock to-day.—Yours, J. RUSSELL.

The interview accordingly took place, and on the following day, the very day on which the Cabinet met, Lord Melbourne gave Lord John a message from the Queen desiring him to see her before taking any extreme measure. Lord John replied—

September 28, 1840.

My dear Melbourne,—I shall be very glad to avail myself of the Queen's wish to see me before taking any extreme measure, or giving any pledge.

It is my anxious desire that matters should be gravely and temperately considered, and that peace should not be thrown away as a child throws away a toy which it has had too long.—Yours truly,

J. RUSSELL.

Thus, when the Cabinet met on the afternoon of the 28th, the whole conditions were changed. It had been summoned to consider an ultimatum of Lord John's; it met to find that the ultimatum, at the Queen's wish, was suspended. It practically was compelled to adopt the conclusion—which seems so impotent and inexplicable when it is related by Mr. Greville, who, well informed in other respects, was ignorant of the

[1] It is right to say that this unsigned memorandum is in Lord John's handwriting; and that his brother-in-law, Mr. George Elliot, in sorting, years afterwards, Lord John's papers, docketed it as a memorandum of Lord John's. It occurred to me at once that it was a copy made by a busy man from some not very legible handwriting, and that the style was Lord Melbourne's and not Lord John's. My conclusion is, I think, placed beyond doubt by my discovering in another bundle of papers the memorandum which follows in the text and is evidently a reply to it. The Princess Royal was born in the following November.

above correspondence—to adjourn for three days. Before it met again, Lord John had agreed to withdraw his resignation and to consider favourably a middle course suggested by Lord Melbourne.

Wilton Crescent: September 29, 1840.

My dear Melbourne,—I entirely subscribe to the Queen's opinion as I understand it, and have taken the liberty of making an extract of that part of her letter. . . . If I understand your suggestion, I think it a good one. I know not that I can do more than attentively consider your proposal, and I wish you would put it in writing for the Cabinet.

Like Canning, I am disposed to say, 'If we are told we must have war sooner or later, I say later.' But I am not for making any humiliating concession to France.

I do not suppose you wish me to go to Windsor to-morrow. I think it better you should go *alone*.—Yours truly,

J. RUSSELL.[1]

The compromise which Lord Melbourne suggested, and which the Cabinet adopted at its adjourned meeting on the 1st of October, was that Lord Palmerston should summon the representatives of the four powers and invite them to make an overture to France. But the adoption of this compromise unfortunately led to fresh misunderstanding. The very day after the Cabinet met, on October 2, the 'Chronicle,' which was believed to be under Lord Palmerston's influence, published so violent an article that Lord John, as he wrote to Lord Melbourne, concluded that it was 'Palmerston's object to drive me out of office.' It soon, moreover, became plain that the adoption of the compromise was made the pretext for fresh delay, and delay in Lord John's judgment increased the chance of war. He was accordingly driven to a fresh remonstrance:—

Downing Street: October 8, 1840.

My dear Lord Melbourne,—I have been willing to act on your advice and not do anything which might appear precipitate. But, having reviewed the events and decisions of the past week, I am now obliged to announce to you my serious determination.

[1] Lord Melbourne's private secretary docketed this letter, 'September 29, 1840: Lord John Russell submits to the Queen's pleasure and retracts his resignation.'

It appeared to me that the concessions offered to Mehemet Ali at the suggestion of the French Government offered at least a basis for negotiating.

I was ready to admit, however, that a peremptory rejection of these terms by the Sultan might render it impossible for us to urge him to accept what he had already refused.

I was sensible, likewise, that an insurrection of the Syrians might compel us in honour to stand by them. And I never, for an instant, lost sight of the fact that we were parties to a treaty, and that all the other members of the Alliance must be consulted before any modification of the terms of the treaty could be agreed to by us.

But I thought that a temperate statement of these obstacles to an immediate settlement should be made to the French Government, and might pave the way to a better understanding between two powers, whose alliance has for some years secured the peace of Europe.

You thought differently. You thought it more advisable to act upon a suggestion of Prince Metternich, made some time ago, and which had a similar object. I did not make any objection to your proposal. Lord Palmerston was instructed by the Cabinet to propose it to the conference.

Accordingly the members of the conference assembled. But it appeared that Baron Brunnow had no instructions to agree to any such communication, and desired to refer to his Court.[1] This it was impossible to refuse, and the proposition waits for the consideration of the Cabinets of St. Petersburg, Vienna, and Berlin.

In the meantime Lord Ponsonby has not restrained himself by any such consideration. He has proceeded at once to advise the Sultan to depose the Pasha of Egypt, and to name a successor. He has likewise advised a blockade of Alexandria, and he has treated the proposals of Mehemet Ali as entirely evasive.

Thus, while difficulty and delay are interposed to every proposition that may tend to maintain peace, those which lead to war are at once adopted. . . .

A further reflection naturally arises.

The country appears on the brink of a war, and there appears to be no power in the Cabinet to take any decision. The questions are urgent, immediate ; they concern British fleets and British operations ;

[1] Mr. Reeve says that Lord Palmerston was aware that Brunnow and the Emperor of Russia would not concur. He consented to Lord Melbourne's proposal to gain time (Greville, *Memoirs*, pt. ii. vol. i. p. 327, *note*).

the highest interests are involved in them : and yet we appear unable to decide on any course without a reference to St. Petersburg.

This position appears to me at once dangerous and degrading. To the treaty we are bound. We cannot depart from it without the consent of our allies. But as to the means to be employed, upon which the Government of France appears, by M. Guizot's memorandum, to feel more jealousy and apprehension than as to the end to be obtained, we are surely not so clogged and trammelled. The fleets and armies of England are not at the disposal of any foreign power. . . .

I do not wish to avoid the responsibility I have incurred. If the means I may point out are immediately adopted, I am willing to bear my share of the blame of all that is past. I consider the policy of the Treaty of July to be sound, and the anger of the French Government and people to be unreasonable. But I cannot allow any chance of peace to be neglected while I remain a member of your Administration.

I must therefore request that you will allow me an early opportunity of stating my views to the Cabinet.—I remain, yours faithfully,

J. RUSSELL.

The Cabinet was accordingly summoned for the 10th. On the eve of its meeting Lord Palmerston wrote—

Panshanger : October 9, 1840.

My dear John Russell,—As I conclude that the Cabinet for which you have summoned us to-morrow is to be about Turkish affairs, pray read with attention the accompanying letters, which I received a few days ago from Hummelauer, who passed through Paris on his way home, and I think you will find in them that all the apprehensions of war which have so industriously been excited in this country by some of our own friends and nominal supporters, and which have had so much effect upon some members of the Cabinet, are entirely unfounded. The real fact is that a few plotters have wove round us all a web of delusion which has hid from many of the Cabinet the real state of things. . . .

Further than this, I had read to me only yesterday afternoon letters from Paris, which, by the information and statements they contain, lead to the same practical conclusion, that, notwithstanding all the indirect and unofficial threats of war, France has no intention of now declaring it ; and that our wisest course is to execute our treaty vigorously and promptly and to make every possible effort for that purpose. The substance of those letters was that Thiers and his

colleagues are at variance—that they blame him for the reckless manner in which he has incurred expenses which they have no funds to meet, and scattered abroad menaces which they have no force to back. The Minister of Finance declares that 193,000,000 francs have been taken from the savings banks and must be replaced. . . . The Minister of War says that the army is greatly below the peace establishment in men and horses. . . . The Minister of Marine . . . says that the inconceivable *imprévoyance* of latter years has left the dockyards entirely destitute of the proper quantity of stores. These letters also say that neither the King nor Thiers has any intention of making war, and that Thiers is going to send us an answer to our despatch of August 31, in which he is to make a conciliatory overture. . . .—Yours sincerely,

PALMERSTON.

Lord John was not convinced.

October 10, 1840.

My dear Palmerston,—Many thanks for sending me H.'s letters. I do not know that they prove that there is no danger of war. . . . I do not suppose that France is less prepared for war than she was in 1792. Pitt in that year said we should have no war; in 1793 he said we should have a short war. Are you sure that you may not make a similar mistake? . . .

However, I believe the French will be ready to be let off with the smallest bit of feather for their caps.

What I wish is to have a fair and frank explanation with them. —Yours truly,

J. RUSSELL.

The Cabinet met on the afternoon of the following day.

Lord John was to have taken the lead and developed his conciliatory notions, but a new turn was given to affairs by a note, which Guizot placed in Palmerston's hands just before the Cabinet, . . . to the last degree moderate and evincing a disposition to be very easily satisfied. . . . It was settled that Palmerston should see Guizot and speak to him in a conciliatory tone, and that a note in a corresponding spirit should be drawn up and sent to the French Government. . . . If anyone but Palmerston was at the Foreign Office everything must be settled at once: but he is so little to be trusted that there is always danger while he is there.[1]

The distrust which Mr. Greville thus expressed in his diary seemed at first to be well founded. Lord Clarendon

[1] Greville, *Memoirs*, pt. ii. vol. i. pp. 335, 336, 337.

complained in a letter to Lord John on the 12th, that no communication had been made to M. Guizot; and upon the same evening M. Guizot personally repeated the complaint.

He said very few words, hoping we should take advantage of this effort of the peace party, settle quickly, and not haggle.

This new remonstrance at last quickened Lord Palmerston's action. The Cabinet again met, and a despatch was sent to Lord Ponsonby desiring him to urge the Porte to reinstate the Pasha in the hereditary government of Egypt.

Thus, in the middle of October, the chances of peace appeared more favourable. Rapid and unexpected successes on the coast of Syria, and the fall of Thiers in France, made peace almost certain; and, happier in himself, Lord John decided on taking a short holiday, and on carrying the children with him down to Bowood. He arrived at Lord Lansdowne's on October 21; and perhaps, in the society of Mr. Moore, Mr. Rogers, Mr. Macaulay, and his host, forgot for a time his own differences with his colleagues and his fears for his country. Yet he was destined to be almost immediately reminded of them by a fresh sorrow. On the day after his arrival at Bowood, his colleague, Lord Holland, died in London. There was certainly no member of the Cabinet, as there were not many people alive, for whom Lord John felt a more sincere affection. He had been intimate with Lord and Lady Holland from his boyhood; he had travelled with them for months in Spain; their house had been almost his home. Lord Holland had watched the development of his mind with the pleasure with which his own intellectual growth had been contemplated by Mr. Fox, and had deferred to his maturer opinions with the generosity of a friend, into whose nature no trace of jealousy or of envy had ever penetrated. The time at which he died, moreover, made the blow the heavier. Lord Holland was the member of the Cabinet who was the most opposed to Lord Palmerston's policy, and his intimate friends did not scruple to say that his anxiety at the state of affairs had hastened his end. Thus Lord John returned to London saddened by the new blow

which had fallen on him.[1] Almost immediately after he was annoyed at learning that Lord Palmerston, without consulting his colleagues, had taken upon himself to reject an important proposal for a conference of the four powers.

Wilton Crescent: October 31, 1840.

My dear Melbourne,—As it appeared to Palmerston that the frequent meeting of Cabinets gave an appearance of uncertainty to our policy, and did harm abroad, I refrained from urging any further meetings at present.

But I own that I expected that . . . no very great question would be determined without my being consulted.

I have now before me a draft of a despatch of October 15, informing Lord Beauvale that a meeting of the representatives of the four powers does not appear to her Majesty's Government to be expedient. . . . I must say that such a decision without concert makes it impossible for me to continue responsible in the House of Commons for the share I have hitherto had in the government of the country.

Finding indeed that, neither with the Cabinet concurring nor alone, my opinion has any weight in the affairs of the country, I am sure the Queen will see that I have no other course but to resign.

Indeed it is much better that Palmerston should lead in the House of Commons than that I should degrade myself by pretending to an influence which I do not possess.—Yours truly,

J. RUSSELL.

On the following day he wrote again :—

Wilton Crescent: November 1, 1840.

My dear Melbourne,—I have received your letter respecting the summons for a Cabinet on the 6th or 7th.

My letter of yesterday will have informed you that I cannot continue a member of the Government.

The measure taken by Lord Ponsonby for extending the blockade of Alexandria to ships of war, and employing our squadron in enforcing it, has, I see, been approved by Lord Palmerston.

This appears to me, for reasons which are obvious, a very dangerous step.

[1] Lord John was one of the authors of the movement for erecting a monument to Lord Holland's memory. He composed the inscription on it, and he wrote to Lord Holland's eldest son a very beautiful apology of his father in reply to a particularly spiteful article in the *Quarterly*, which had given great pain to Lady Holland.

You tell me in a note I have this moment received that 'we have now a prospect, and as it appears to me a very good one, of setttling this matter amicably.'

I confess I see no such prospect. The very first preliminary to any arrangement must be in my view the removal of Lord Ponsonby from his post.

If this is done, and the prospect you have of settling the matter clearly laid before me, I shall be ready to attend the Cabinet on the day you may appoint.

But I cannot do so at present, and I have already explained to her Majesty that I cannot defend in the House of Commons measures which I think wrong.

If I concurred in the measures, you may be sure I should not mind any offence to myself. But I think the answer to Austria should have been in a different spirit, and should not have laid the ground for her abandoning the Alliance.—I remain, yours very truly,

J. RUSSELL.

Lord Melbourne, in reply to this letter, told Lord John that his resignation would involve the dissolution of the Ministry, as he would not remain at the head of the Government with Lord Palmerston as its representative in the House of Commons. And, at the Prime Minister's suggestion, Lord Palmerston himself called on Lord John, and admitted that he had been wrong about the despatch.[1]

Palmerston was here yesterday, and was very handsomely civil about the reply to Metternich. . . . He says Ponsonby will be entitled to his pension in December. Seeing this, and that Ponsonby has really done well in urging the Porte to vigorous measures in Syria, I have written to Palmerston to propose a special mission, leaving Ponsonby the rank and title of Ambassador. Surely that is not asking too great a concession from a colleague to whom both you and I have conceded and confided so much.[2]

Lord Palmerston replied to Lord John's new proposal—

C[arlton] T[errace]: November 6, 1840.

My dear John Russell,— . . . It may in a general point of view be doubted whether special missions in addition to established ones are attended with advantage. The special envoy cannot at once

[1] Greville, *Memoirs*, pt. ii. vol. i. p. 345.

[2] To Lord Melbourne, November 2, 1840.

form a correct judgment of men and things in a new scene of action, but yet will probably form *some* judgment, and, if that differs from that of the established envoy, mischief will ensue. . . . In fact, differences will constantly arise between the two, because it will be the interest of many persons to create such differences. Even if none exist they will be imagined, because other persons will watch every word that falls from each, and will endeavour to find differences of opinion in what may only be differences in the mode of expressing the same opinion. Then the established minister is necessarily wounded in his feelings by the want of confidence so publicly manifested by the special mission, and . . . his power of being useful must be diminished because he will fall in the estimation of the Government to which he is accredited : and yet the special envoy will not gain what the established minister loses in influence, because the special envoy has no root in the place. . . . But I am sure you will feel, from a knowledge of Ponsonby's character, and from a general knowledge of what any man of spirit would feel in such a case, that Ponsonby would look upon such a special mission as a public affront, and come away immediately : and, if we meant to recall him, it would be a more direct course to do so distinctly, rather than do that which would goad him to come away. . . .

But let us consider what Ponsonby's conduct has been, and what his merits or demerits. He certainly advised the deposal of Mehemet Ali without instructions : but . . . has not the result shown that the measure has been of great advantage to us? because it has given us something to go to market with to the French, and has created something for the French to insist upon, and for us to acquiesce in without touching the stipulations of the treaty. . . . It is true that Ponsonby has always declared his opinion that Mehemet Ali ought to be deposed or destroyed : and, to say the honest truth, I am much inclined to think he is right in this, and that it would not only be desirable but possible to do so : desirable, I mean, with reference solely to the interests of the Porte, and the securing the independence of the Ottoman Empire. But other considerations, which it belongs to the British Government rather than to our ambassador at Constantinople to judge of, may certainly render it on the whole inexpedient to carry matters so far. . . .

On the other hand, it is fair to consider what Ponsonby may justly say he has done to deserve our favour instead of punishment. . . . It is admitted by all that he has gained the confidence of the Porte, and has established our influence more firmly at Constantinople than it ever was established before. He has stimulated the

Turkish Government to military and naval exertions of which they were thought incapable; he has persuaded them to place the naval force under an English Admiral (Walker); and their land force under the orders and direction of Sir Charles Smith; . . . and, by his communications with the Syrian chiefs, he has prepared the whole population of Syria to rise, as it is doing, not only against Mehemet Ali, but in favour of the Sultan. I know not what more the ablest and most active ambassador could possibly have done in furtherance of the policy adopted by the Treaty of July.

. . . . . .

The defeat of Ibrahim is a most important event, and we may fairly look upon the whole of Syria as virtually restored to the Sultan.

Yours sincerely,

PALMERSTON.

Mr. Greville says that this letter, which he had not seen, but the purport of which he evidently knew, 'must have been a very good one, for it entirely brought over Lord John to his opinion, and even convinced Clarendon himself.'[1] But the fact was that the tide of events rolled decisively in Lord Palmerston's favour. Almost every mail brought tidings either of the reluctance of France to go to war, or of fresh successes on the coast of Syria; till at last the fall of Acre necessitated Ibrahim's retreat and practically terminated the crisis; while Lord Palmerston, with the good taste which disarmed an opponent, wound up the correspondence by giving Lord John the credit.

C[arlton] T[errace]: December 4, 1840.

My dear John Russell,—It is quite true that our policy in the Levant has been more completely and more rapidly successful than the most sanguine of us could have ventured to hope: and I think you must feel gratified that it was your support of the Treaty of July which chiefly induced the Cabinet to adopt it. . . .—Yours sincerely,

PALMERSTON.

It would have required a rougher temperament than that with which Lord John was endowed, to quarrel with a colleague who bore his triumphs so well, and was so generous to others. Yet Lord John was undoubtedly in the right, both in his demands and in his complaints.

[1] Greville, *Memoirs*, pt. ii. vol. i. p. 347

Wilton Crescent: November 19, 1840.

My dear Melbourne,—. . . In the days of Lord Grey, every important note was carefully revised by him, and generally submitted to the Cabinet. As Paymaster of the Forces, I then had more information and more power of advising than I have now. At present I receive the most important despatches in a printed form some days after they are sent. . .

Now it cannot, of course, be expected that I am to defend in the House of Commons acts which I have not advised, and of which the editors [of newspapers] are as cognisant as myself. . . .

To this day I am not aware what was written to Lord Granville in consequence of our two Cabinet meetings.

All this is very unpleasant, but I think it best to tell you what I feel. I beg, however, that you will not send this letter to Palmerston.

Yours truly,

J. RUSSELL.

But for the present Lord Palmerston had prevailed. Few indeed could have foreseen the full consequences of his success. His high-handed proceedings in 1840 were to prevent the formation of a Whig Government in 1845; repeated from 1846 to 1850, they were to lead to complaints on his sovereign's part which read like mere echoes of Lord John's letter of 1840; and they were eventually to occasion his own removal from office in 1851, and the disruption of the Whig party in 1852.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE FALL OF LORD MELBOURNE.

THE year 1841 opened favourably for the Whig Government. News arrived on January 6 that Dost Mahommed, the Afghan King whom Lord Auckland had dethroned, had surrendered to the British at Cabul; and that the Chinese had made terms with Admiral Elliot. The Duke of Bedford wrote from Woburn—

> I wish you joy of the good news from China. You and your colleagues may march into Parliament on the first day with colours flying and drums beating. Old Byng says he went to Brighton in the autumn with five wishes in his heart :—
>
> 1st. That there might be good news from Syria.
>
> 2nd. Good from India.
>
> 3rd. Good from China.
>
> 4th. A majority for Guizot.
>
> 5th. The safety of the Queen and her child.
>
> All have been realised; and all are humane and benevolent wishes.

Yet nothing is certain but the unforeseen. The year which commenced thus auspiciously witnessed a renewal of the Chinese war; a disaster, unprecedented in its magnitude, in Afghanistan; and the crushing defeat of the Government.

When Parliament met on January 26, 1841, the debate on the Address was rapidly disposed of. Lord John, who had been staying at Broadlands with Lord Palmerston during the recess, was able to defend the policy of the Treaty of July. No outward sign was visible of the dissensions which had nearly wrecked the Ministry in the previous autumn, and the Whigs seemed more firmly seated in office than they had been since 1839.

At the opening of the session, however, one or two bye-

elections were unexpectedly carried by Tory candidates, and the fears and hopes thereby excited on either side of the House were confirmed by the first great contest of the session —on the Irish Registration Bill [1]—which the Government only succeeded in carrying by 299 votes to 294. The Whig majority had thus fallen to the exact point which had induced Lord Melbourne to tender his resignation in the spring of 1839.

This fact alone made it necessary for the Government to make a great effort. But another circumstance simultaneously forced them to adopt a bold policy. The years of Whig rule under Lord Melbourne had been years of famine; trade had been stagnant; agriculture depressed; the revenue had declined; and Mr. Spring Rice had not had the courage to propose—while Lord Melbourne had not had the wisdom to insist on—measures to terminate the constantly increasing deficits which had occurred. Mr. Baring, succeeding to the Exchequer, made an honest attempt to terminate a discreditable deficiency by raising the burdens all round. But the Budget of 1840 was not much more successful than the Budgets which preceded it. Lord Palmerston's foreign policy, by creating alarm and increasing expenditure, indirectly occasioned a fresh deficiency; and, as the old system of increased taxation had broken down, it was absolutely necessary to try some new method.

No statesman under such circumstances could avoid dealing with the customs tariff. The twelve hundred duties which encumbered it had avowedly been placed on it, not for the purpose of revenue, but for the purpose of protection. And an increase of these duties brought no corresponding benefit to the Exchequer, because they were already prohibitive, and destroyed the trade on which in theory they relied. They were not all founded on the same principle. Those which had been designed for the protection of the home trade were

[1] I have not thought it necessary to relate in detail the protracted struggle on Irish Registration, which commenced in 1840 and was renewed in 1841. Lord Morpeth was the chief champion on one side, and Lord Stanley on the other: the Whigs desiring to extend the Irish franchise and to remove difficulties in the way of its exercise; the Tories endeavouring to restrict the franchise and to clear the register of fictitious voters.

based on the idea that foreign competition could and should be destroyed by the heavy taxation of foreign goods. Where protection was afforded to the colonies an intermediate plan was adopted. The colonial goods were taxed; and the competing foreign goods were taxed more heavily. The colonist, in short, was to enjoy an advantage as against the foreigner, while the home producer was to have a similar advantage as against the colonist. Taxation on cereals, again, was based on a third principle. Statesmen had taken infinite pains to devise what was known as a sliding scale, which, in spite of long experience to the contrary, they fondly imagined would equalise the price of corn, since the rate of duty varied with the price, rising as it fell, and falling as it rose.

This system, denounced in the previous century in 'The Wealth of Nations,' and assailed in the nineteenth century by the later economists, flourished in 1841 almost in its pristine vigour. Few statesmen had either the knowledge or the hardihood to question its expediency. Lord John himself had begun his life by declaring that 'political economy is an awful thing;' and even in his 'Essay on the Constitution' he had written, 'Without going the length of the Venetian proverb, "Prima Veneziani, poi Cristiani," I am disposed to say, "Let us first be Englishmen, and then economists."'[1]

Before the close of 1838, however, the increasing distress of the country, and the growing activity of the Anti-Corn Law League, had satisfied Lord John that the existing system could not be maintained; and early in January 1839 he publicly avowed his own opinions:—

> I gave my support to the Bill of [1828],[2] considering it an improvement on the former prohibitory system. But it is my opinion that a moderate fixed duty would be more advantageous, not only to trade and manufacture, but also to agriculture, than our present fluctuating scale. It is desirable not to alter too frequently the laws by which the direction of capital and the channels of industry are regulated; but it is also desirable not to maintain a system of duties which, as experience has shown, increases the high prices of dear years to the consumer, and decreases the low prices of cheap years to the pro-

[1] *Essays on Life and Character*, p. 125. *English Constitution*, p. 295.

[2] The Corn Law passed by the Wellington Administration.

ducer. I give you this as my individual opinion ; but it is one which I shall be ready to support with my vote in the House of Commons.

This avowal brought Lord John letters both of dismay and approval. On the one hand, Lord Western, as an old Tory, wrote —

It is a source of infinite regret and sorrow to me that I find myself diametrically opposed to your Lordship in opinion upon the subject of the Corn Law. . . . We owe you an eternal debt of gratitude for the Commutation and Poor Law Acts, for which, alas ! the agricultural public give you little credit. The Poor Law was necessary to our salvation ; the maintenance of the Corn Law is little less so.

On the other hand, Lord Ebrington, Mr. Poulett Thomson, and others, wrote to assure him of the pleasure which his announcement had given them, and of their regret that he spoke only as an individual and not as representing the Government. Lord John's avowal was, however, attended with marked success. In 1838 Mr. Villiers had only received the support of 95 members on his annual motion on the Corn Laws. In 1839 the minority was raised to 172. Encouraged by this success Mr. Villiers renewed the attack by moving for a committee of the whole House on the Corn Law of 1828. And, though the Prime Minister, while the debate was going on, 'declared before God that he considered leaving the whole agricultural interest without protection the wildest and maddest scheme that had ever entered into the imagination of man,' Mr. Villiers secured the support of 195 members ; and Lord Palmerston, Lord Howick, Lord Morpeth, Mr. Spring Rice, Sir John Hobhouse, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Baring, Sir George Grey, and Mr. Wood all followed Lord John and Mr. Villiers into the lobby.[1]

Though no immediate consequences ensued from this division, there could be no doubt that Lord John's declaration had altered the whole position of the question. At the commencement of 1841, Mr. Ward—the author of the Appropriation Clause—wrote to Lord John that he felt it a duty to tell him how much he admired, and how warmly he acknowledged,

[1] See the author's *History of England*, iv. 65.

the service which he had done to 'the cause of humanity and common sense in determining to give fair play to the Wakefield theory of colonisation;' and he added—

I regret deeply your differences with us upon the ballot. But now that the course of the Government is no longer affected by these, there is nothing to prevent us from acting cordially with you as our leader. The country is frightened, as well it might be, at the possibility of seeing bigotry again restored to power. But the one thing asked by all is whether the Government will dare to deal with the Corn Laws or not. Nothing else, in my belief, can save the country or you.

A month after the date of this letter, Mr. Baring laid before the Cabinet the proposals which he contemplated for dealing with the deficit. It was then seen that, instead of touching corn, he proposed to reconstruct the timber and sugar duties. Up to 1841 colonial timber paid a duty of 10*s.*, and foreign timber of 55*s.* a load. Colonial sugar paid a duty of 24*s.*; foreign sugar of 63*s.* a hundredweight. Mr. Baring desired to reduce the duty on foreign sugar to 36*s.*, the duty on foreign timber to 50*s.*, and to raise the duty on colonial timber to 20*s.* These changes he thought could be effected without raising the price either of sugar or timber: they would result—it was certain—in a large expansion of trade, and thereby produce an additional revenue of 1,300,000*l.*

Lord John had some doubts on this proposal both as to what it did and as to what it did not. Thus he wrote on February 9, in a memorandum for his colleagues:—

I need not here insist on arguments familiar to all the world. The practical operation of the present Corn Law is nearly the same as a prohibition up to 72*s.* or 73*s.* and then admission at a low duty.

Trade would be rendered certain, and the supply constant, and manufacturers obtain, or rather retain, a good position in foreign markets, if, instead of the present scale, you had one something like the following:—

60*s.* price to 70*s.* . . .	8*s.* duty.
70*s.* and above . . .	4*s.* ,,
50*s.* to 60*s.*	12*s.* ,,
Below 50*s.*	16*s.* ,,

The principle proclaimed by Sir Robert Peel and Sir J. Graham would be adhered to; and yet merchants would know what to expect, and when corn rose to 60*s.* would import largely.

The increase to the revenue it is not easy to calculate. I should suppose from 600,000*l.* to 800,000*l.*

When it is proposed to favour the foreign slave trade to increase the revenue and obtain sugar cheap, it appears to me that we cannot shut our eyes to the grievous privation attendant on the present monopoly of corn.

J. RUSSELL.

Thus, early in February, Lord John had formally brought before the Cabinet the question of corn. In the two months which followed, representations were made to the Government that frauds had been and always would be committed while a sliding scale was continued; and the Cabinet consequently determined to substitute a fixed duty of 8*s.* on wheat for the graduated duty which Lord John had originally suggested. Some members of the Cabinet, indeed, had little enthusiasm for the change; and the Prime Minister himself, as his colleagues were leaving the room, said, 'By the bye, there is one thing we haven't agreed upon, which is, what we are to say. Is it to make our corn dearer or cheaper, or to make the price steady? I don't care which: but we had better all be in the same story.'[1]

The Budget which Mr. Baring had framed was proposed on April 30. But the whole of the scheme was not laid before the House on that day. Mr. Baring was only authorised to explain his own proposals respecting timber and sugar, while Lord John, before the Chancellor of the Exchequer rose, announced his intention of moving the House into a committee on the Corn Laws on May 31. This curious arrangement suggested the criticism that the Ministry was only proposing half a Budget; and Mr. Baring himself encouraged this view by declaring that the proposal which Lord John would bring forward would relieve him from any anxiety about the insufficiency of the revenue. Even a strong Administration could hardly have maintained its reserve; and

[1] I found this very characteristic anecdote in a letter from Lord Clarendon to Lord John of March 22, 1851.

the Ministry was beyond all question weaker than at the commencement of the session. It had, in the first place, been affected by the receipt of unfavourable intelligence both from China and Canada; and it had, in the next place, experienced an annoying defeat on the Irish Registration Bill, which had proved that it could place no dependence on its nominal supporters. Under such circumstances it was impossible to maintain reserve any further; and accordingly, on May 7, Lord John admitted that the change which was contemplated in the Corn Laws was the imposition of a fixed duty of 8*s.* a quarter on wheat.

The whole of the proposals of the Ministry were thus known when the debate on the proposed alteration in the sugar duties began. This debate was historically one of the most important which ever took place in the House of Commons. It was protracted over eight nights; it led, in its ultimate consequences, to the fall of the Ministry; and it was the first great battle on the new policy which was apparently for all time to inspire commercial legislation. It was opened by Lord John, in a speech which Mr. Greville called 'an extraordinarily good speech.' Mr. Charles Villiers wrote—

Dear Lord John,—I cannot forbear from expressing to you the very sincere satisfaction with which I heard your most able and statesman-like speech last night. Of its effect on the House you were not, I think, left in doubt. But I can assure you that I hear but one opinion respecting it from every person that I see.

While Lord Sydenham, writing from Canada, said—

I have read your speech upon opening the debate on the sugar question with feelings of admiration and pleasure I cannot describe. *The Free Traders have never been orators since Mr. Pitt in early days. We hammered away with facts and figures and some argument, but we could not elevate the subject and excite the feelings of the people.*[1] At last you who can do both have fairly undertaken it, and the cause

[1] The words which I have italicised seem to have been used by Lord Sydenham on some other occasion in 1841, since they are quoted by Mr. Morley in his *Life of Cobden*, i. 143. But Mr. Morley was, of course, unaware that Lord Sydenham had concluded the sentence by the emphatic approval of Lord John which follows in the text.

has a champion worthy of it. I regret that I am not once more on the Treasury bench to enjoy the triumph and to lend my humble assistance in the fight.

His brother the Duke wrote hurriedly—

I congratulate you on your most admirable speech. . . . Lord George Bentinck, the most bigoted and violent of Tories, came up to White's to dine, and said it was the best and most statesmanlike speech he had ever heard.

And Lord William, writing from Berlin, on the 10th, said—

You delight me. When one thinks you beat to a mummy, you are on your legs again knocking about you with renewed vigour. Your Corn Law proposition is a master move. It has made a great sensation in Germany, and you are lauded to the skies. Palmerston's foreign policy, and now your domestic policy, are the culmination of all. But you must swim again in troubled waters. However, I believe the more they are troubled, the more you like them. If the Tories curse you, the poor will bless you. So fight on to the last. It is a noble struggle.

It was, however, soon evident that Lord John's speech was included in the common category of speeches which have more effect on opinion than on votes. The policy which the Ministers were pursuing won no support from the Tory camp, and alienated dozens of prejudiced men on their own side. In 1841 no Tory was prepared to abandon Protection; and many Whigs were reluctant to handicap freed labour in the West Indies by admitting slave-grown sugar on easier terms into the market. It was in vain that Lord John, speaking with the authority with which his office invested him, drew a striking picture of the comfort which generally prevailed throughout the colonies, and of the terrible destitution which was unhappily prevalent in the manufacturing districts of Northern England; it was in vain that he argued that the poor, in many cases disposed to substitute tea and coffee for the spirituous liquors in which they too freely indulged, were unable to afford the sugar which they required at the only price at which it was obtainable. It was in vain that he showed that philanthropy, so busily denouncing the importation of slave-grown sugar on slightly easier terms, was carrying

slave-grown coffee from Brazil to the Cape, and then re-shipping it from the Cape of Good Hope for the sake of obtaining its admission under the lower rate of duty charged on colonial produce. It was in vain that he pointed out that British refiners were importing slave-grown sugar into England, were refining it in bond, and then exporting it to the Continent; and that West Indian planters were purchasing slave-grown sugar so refined, were carrying it to the West Indies, and returning it to England as colonial sugar. Philanthropy, in other words, was reconciling its conscience by putting a lump of free-grown sugar into a cup of slave-grown coffee; by selling readily to the foreigner the slave-grown sugar it persisted in denying to its own suffering fellow citizens; and by insisting that, if British people would consume foreign sugar, it should be purified by a double voyage across the Atlantic. What then? Lord John might succeed in delivering a speech both unanswered and unanswerable; but in the midst of the triumph he might have recollected the old line that 'when the judgment's weak, the prejudice is strong,' and have anticipated the coming end.

Already, before the debate had begun, defeat and its consequences had been foreshadowed both by the Ministers and their friends. The party was clamorous for a dissolution, and men as well informed as Lord Spencer believed that that expedient was resolved on.

Althorp: May 2, 1841.

My dear John, . . .—With respect to the decision you have made, I believe you are right; but I confess that I am rather sorry that it is right, or rather that you have been obliged to come to it. You will be beaten, I conclude, to a certainty in the present House of Commons, and I feel also quite sure that in a general election where the main point of issue is the Corn Laws the result will be most unfavourable to our party. You know I always thought that in our Reform Act we gave rather too great a preponderance to the landed interest; but, in the present state of the feelings of the country, any system of representation which . . . could possibly be adopted would give an overwhelming majority to those who support what is called Protection to the land, and therefore the Reform Act is not to be blamed for the result of this question which I anticipate This

result I think will be total discomfiture to the Whig party, and a renewal of Tory government. But it will be Tory government with a reformed House of Commons, which will be a great improvement upon Tory government with the old House of Commons. . . .—Yours most truly,

SPENCER.

No truer forecast was ever given. Yet Lord Spencer, right in his predictions, was wrong in his premises. The Ministry had not resolved on dissolution. On the contrary, the First Minister was strongly opposed to it. But the Duke of Bedford shall explain Lord Melbourne's views :—

Monday morning.

I saw Melbourne yesterday. He asked my opinion about dissolution, and has evidently strong objections to it. But they appear to be objections personal to himself on account of the very decided declarations he has made more than once in the House of Lords against agitating the country on the corn question without a much stronger feeling in favour of change than he now possesses. To be sure there is much force in this, but the objection does not apply to you, or any other member of the Cabinet. The question will then arise—Can you take his place if he stands alone in opinion against dissolution, and considers himself too far committed to alter his course? . . . . With respect to your supporters generally, they are eager for dissolution ; and I think the pressure from without, whatever might be the opinion within, will be very strong.

Two days later the Lord Chancellor wrote a long letter to Lord John, urging him, whatever might be the division, to persevere with the Sugar Bill, and place the real issue fairly before the country. Lord John, in forwarding it to Lord Melbourne, said—

I think there is great force in what the Chancellor says of proposing to go on with sugar duties, even taking the chance of a direct address to remove Ministers.

But all depends on your being willing to adopt this course.

If you are, I am quite willing to carry it into effect.

I would then go on till the Sugar Duty Bill was absolutely stopped or delayed by the Tory party.

A week afterwards the Government was defeated by a majority of thirty-six, and Lord John wrote—

May 19, 1841.

My dear Melbourne,—The majority of thirty-six, and Peel's speech, have made it impossible to postpone the decision on dissolution or resignation. No one would bear a further suspense. If we go on with the sugar duties, all will conclude that we mean to dissolve, and you will be committed before you intend it.

We must therefore decide to-day.

I am for dissolution ; but I see all the objections to that course. I should hope, however, that you would hear every member of the Cabinet before you make up your own mind. . . .

I have adjourned the House till to-morrow. But we should meet at one o'clock still.

Peel made a magnificent speech,[1] and Palmerston spoke exceedingly well.—Yours,

J. R.

The Cabinet determined to persevere. And, on the following day, May 20, Mr. Baring stated that on the succeeding Monday he should ask the House to 'resolve itself into a Committee of Ways and Means to move the usual annual sugar duties therein.' The announcement was received with astonishment by a House which was expecting to hear its own fate or the fate of the Government; and Lord Darlington at once asked Lord John, as it appeared to be his intention, notwithstanding the division of the other night, to cling with an unparalleled tenacity to office, when he intended to bring forward the question of the Corn Laws. Lord John simply replied, 'On Friday, the 4th of June ;' and the House, in a state of doubt and excitement, unable to address itself to business, after dealing with one or two formal matters, adjourned till the following Monday. On that day Sir Robert Peel gave formal notice that, on the ensuing Monday, he would move a vote of want of confidence in the Ministry.

[1] Mr. Greville writes : 'A very fine speech, three hours long, from Peel, which John Russell said he thought remarkably able and ingenious, but not statesmanlike. He has, however, always a prejudice against his great antagonist, and a bad opinion of him.' I have inserted Lord John's real opinion in the text to show how much more generous it was than Mr. Greville supposed. And I may say here that, while I have found many proofs in Lord John's papers of his admiration for Sir Robert Peel, I have not found any evidence of prejudice against him.

The new debate on Sir Robert Peel's motion, which was thus proposed, was concluded on June 4 (the very evening on which Lord John had intended to bring forward his Corn Law proposal), when the Ministry was defeated by a majority of one; and on the following Monday Lord John announced that the Government would merely wind up any necessary business, and appeal to the country. In reply to Sir Robert Peel he added that no time would be lost either in dissolving the present Parliament or in summoning a new one; so that the fate of the Government might at once be determined by a House of Commons expressly elected to pronounce it.[1]

In effect, Parliament was dissolved on the 23rd of June. Since the formation of the Whig Ministry, Lord John had represented Stroud. When a dissolution was resolved on, the Liberals of the City of London sent him a requisition, signed by nearly 5,000 persons, inviting him to contest the City.

'The authority of the first city in the United Kingdom,' —as he told his old constituents at Stroud in a farewell address,—was 'so great that he felt he could not shrink from the acceptance of this spontaneous and generous offer.' And though—to quote the words of the address which he issued at the same time to the electors of the City—on an ordinary occasion he would have preferred that some one more conversant with their various affairs should have been chosen as their representative,

This is no ordinary occasion. In framing the measures lately announced to Parliament, it has been the wish of the Queen's Government to lighten that kind of taxation which, while it yields nothing to the Exchequer, presses heavily upon the people. They

[1] Sir Robert Peel, in winding up the debate on the no-confidence question, had made, fairly enough, a very strong attack on the Government, but had rather unnecessarily and unfairly stated that the Government had adopted the Budget at a very recent period, and that they had brought forward the subject solely with the view of producing excitement among the people and not with the view of really considering the question. The Duke of Bedford was very angry at this charge against his brother, and begged Lord John on June 7 'not to let Peel escape to-night.' Lord John, as a matter of fact, did deny the charge; and Sir Robert accepted his denial.

have endeavoured, at the same time, to give every fair consideration to the political interests of the country. But their main object has been to increase the comfort, to promote the trade, and to unchain the industry of the great pervading interests of the whole community. These measures have suffered in our hands a temporary defeat, but I cannot doubt the truth of the principles on which they are founded. Nor can I believe that, in the great metropolis of commerce, these principles will be condemned. Anxious to see your weight thrown into the scale against monopoly, and your testimony given in favour of freedom of trade, I cheerfully ask your suffrages and hope to be sustained by your enlightened approbation.

His confidence was very nearly misplaced. Lord John, though returned, was at the bottom of the list of the four successful candidates. But the City, if it hesitated to accept him as its representative at the first, remained faithful to him afterwards. In the preceding eighteen years Lord John had sat for Tavistock, for Huntingdonshire, Bandon, Tavistock again, Devonshire, and Stroud. In the succeeding eighteen years of House of Commons life he sat for London alone.

Lord John refrained from thanking the electors for their support till the succeeding 19th of July. On that day he issued a long address, which, as an apology for his policy in the past and a declaration of his policy for the future, is so important that it must be inserted almost entire :—

In the early part of last year, when a resolution declaring want of confidence in the Government was brought forward, I distinctly announced the intention of proposing additional taxes to meet the increased expenditure of the country. In the present year . . . . we found that the new taxes were not sufficient to supply the deficiency. We were of opinion that we could not with due regard to the honour and safety of the nation reduce its naval and military force. But, upon a careful review of our commercial imposts, we came to the conclusion that, by removing prohibitions and lessening restrictions, it was possible to replenish the treasury, and at the same time to secure to the working classes a greater command of the necessaries of life at steady and moderate prices. The first measure brought forward on the subject was intended to give increased freedom of trade to our colonies. But, in defending this measure in a debate before Easter, I stated that the Cabinet were resolved to extend the same principles

to our whole commercial policy . . . . In the face of this declaration it has been asserted that our commercial and financial plans were brought forward only because we had been defeated on a clause in the Irish Registration Bill. It was difficult to refute our arguments; it was easy to misconstrue our motives. . . . Others have said that, with a precarious majority in the House of Commons, we ought not to have announced measures of such vast importance. But, had we resigned with a deficient revenue, and without pointing out the means of improving it, the same persons would with far more justice have accused us of being afraid to meet the difficulties we had caused. . . . It appeared to us, on the contrary, that it was our duty to lay before the House of Commons plans which we considered beneficial. When defeated there we advised her Majesty to appeal to the people at large. As soon as the new Parliament meets we shall take the first opportunity of asking for a clear and decided judgment upon the policy we have proposed. The result of such an appeal may be easily foreseen. . . . As no Ministers of the Crown can stand without the confidence of the House of Commons, our retirement from office will immediately follow the condemnation of our policy. In this altered position it would be inconsistent with my notions of public duty to harass the Government of the day by vexatious opposition, still less to deny to the Crown the means of maintaining the reputation of the country abroad and internal quiet at home. But when the great principles of religious, civil, and commercial liberty come into question, those principles must be firmly and fearlessly supported. Whatever party may be in power, they are so inseparably connected with the progress of society that, although the country may doubt, may pause, may ponder, it will examine, discuss, and finally adopt them.

We know from Mr. Greville that the language which Lord John held in private corresponded with that which he used in this remarkable address. He assured his brother the Duke that, 'while he would be in his place to support the good cause, he would adhere to a moderate course,' though he was aware that he should run the risk of giving great offence to many of his party, and probably of determining his own exclusion from office; and Mr. Greville adds—

The letter of John Russell's to which I have alluded was a very amiable and creditable production. As it was written in habitual confidence to his brother, it is impossible to doubt his sincerity. After speaking of his political intentions and his probable exclusion

from office, he proceeded to say that he looked forward with delight to his establishment at Endsleigh,[1] and to the opportunity of resuming some long-neglected studies, and he said that he should be under the necessity of attending to those domestic economies which he had also not had time to think of: that he cared not for poverty; should have a sufficiency for comfort; and could always by writing and publishing add a few hundreds to his income. I was struck with the calm philosophy and the unselfish patriotism which his letter breathed, and with the grateful feelings he expressed at the happiness which seemed yet to be preserved for him. It is pleasant to contemplate a mind so well regulated—at once so vigorous, honest, and gentle; it cannot fail to be happy, because it possesses that salutary energy which is always filling the mind with good food; those pure and lofty aspirations which are able to quell the petty passions and infirmities which assail and degrade inferior minds; and, above all, those warm affections which seek for objects round which they may cling, which are the best safeguard against selfishness, and diffuse throughout the moral being that vital glow which animates existence itself, is superior to all other pleasures, and renders all evils comparatively light.

Happily for Lord John his warm affections had found a new object to cling to, and, in the hour of his fall, he could meditate on his own joy. For, with Lord John, political crises synchronised mysteriously with his own personal history; and at the close of the election of 1841 he was married to Lady Fanny Elliot.

Perhaps his second marriage strikingly illustrates the extended period through which, in good report and evil report, he had led the House of Commons. For while, on the day which had succeeded his first marriage, he had been hastily recalled from his honeymoon to assume the duties of Secretary of State, it was only on the day which preceded his second marriage that he wrote the eloquent and dignified address in which he practically bade, at any rate a temporary, farewell to power.

Those only who have read the letters which Lord John received from relatives and friends, in times of trouble or of joy, can realise the deep affection which his strong sym-

[1] The seventh Duke, immediately after the sixth Duke's death, placed Endsleigh at Lord John's disposal.

pathetic nature attracted. Such letters cannot properly be published in a memoir of this character; but, as Miss Lister's letter to him in 1840 has already been given, it may perhaps be permissible to insert a few extracts from her congratulations :—

June 8, 1841.

My dear Lord John,—Oh! I am happier than I can tell you. God knows you have deserved all the good that may come to you. I always felt it *must* be because of that. I long to be with you, and to see her. . . . Oh! I am so happy that I can scarcely believe it yet. I hope Lady Fanny will write, and then I think I shall believe it.—Ever your affectionate,

HARRIET LISTER.

Lord John's marriage with Lady Fanny took place at Minto on July 20. The bride and bridegroom drove from Minto to Bowhill, which had been lent to them by the Duke and Duchess of Buccleuch.[1] There they spent the remainder of July; and there Lady John received from her mother the following little ballad :—

A BORDER BALLAD.

Air. Saw ye my Father.

Oh, saw ye the robber
That's come ow'r the border
And has stown bonny Fanny away?
She's gane awa frae me
And the bonny north countrie,
And has left me for ever and aye.

He cam' na wi' horses,
He cam' na wi' men,
Like the bauld English knights lang syne;
But he thought that he could fleech
Wi' his bonny southron speech
And wyle awa' this lassie o' mine.

'Gae hame, gae hame
To your ain countrie,
Nor come ow'r the March for me.'

[1] It will be recollected that the Duchess of Buccleuch was Lord John's first cousin.

But sairly did she rue,
When he thought that she spak' true,
And the teardrop it blinded her ee.

His heart it was sair,
And he lo'ed her mair and mair,
For her spirit was noble and free.
'Oh! lassie dear, relent,
Nor let a heart be rent
That lives but for its countrie and thee.'

And did she say him nay?
Oh no, he won the day,
Could an Elliot a Russell disdain?
And he's ta'en awa' his bride
Frae the bonny Teviot side,
And has left me sae eerie alane.

Oh where's now the smile
Used to cheer me ilk morn
Like a blink o' the sun's ain light;
And where 's the voice sae sweet
That aye gar'd my bosom beat
When sae softly she bade me gude night?

Now lang lang are the nights
And dowie are the days
That sae cheerie were ance for me;
And oh, the thought is sair
That she 'll mine be nevermair:
I'm alane in the north countrie.

Lord and Lady John remained at Bowhill till Saturday, July 31, when they returned to Minto; the people of Selkirk receiving them on their way with great demonstrations, and presenting Lord John with the freedom of the borough. They left Minto on August 10, were received at Hawick by an 'immense crowd, tremendous cheering, bells ringing, banners waving;' and, after passing a day or two on the lakes—which Lady John had never seen—drove on to Lancaster, at that time the northern terminus of the railway, which carried them the next day to London. They reached London on Saturday, August 14; gave their first little dinner to Lord and Lady

Minto and the Duke of Bedford on the following Wednesday, Lord John's forty-ninth birthday; and on the Thursday the new Parliament met to choose a Speaker. It fell to Lord John's lot, as still the nominal leader of the House, to congratulate Mr. Lefevre on his re-election to the Chair. Except for Mr. Lefevre's sake, he would himself have preferred that the debate should have taken another course, and that the election of a Tory Speaker should have given the Ministry an excuse for retirement. But, when Sir Robert Peel decided on Mr. Lefevre's re-election, the Ministry behaved in a manner which was eminently creditable. Lord John, who had for some time been in communication with Lord Stanley on colonial matters of importance, sent the speech which it was proposed that the Queen should deliver to Sir Robert Peel in order that he should have ample time to prepare the necessary amendment. He thus facilitated by his conduct the preparation of the great debate which preceded his own fall. He himself, as leader of the House, wound up the discussion on the last of the four nights over which it was protracted. Nothing, of course, that he could say could affect the inevitable issue: the Whigs were beaten by a decisive majority of ninety-one; and Lord John at once announced the defeat to the Queen. This was the Queen's answer:—

Windsor Castle: August 28, 1841.

The Queen has received Lord John Russell's letter of this morning, containing the account of the division in the House of Commons.

Long as the Queen was prepared for this event, she does not for that feel it the less painful. She is deeply grieved to have to part from those she has such confidence in; she trusts, however, that at no very distant period she will again see Lord John Russell in the office which he has filled so much to the satisfaction of both his sovereign and his country.

The Queen feels very grateful for Lord John's kind wishes for herself, and cannot conclude without expressing the lively interest she will ever feel in his personal welfare and happiness, as well as in his career in public life.

On the same evening Lord John announced the resignation of the Government in the House of Commons.

We began, on the commencement of Lord Grey's Administration, with the Reform Act. We ended by proposing measures for the freedom of commerce. With large and important measures we commenced; with large and important measures we conclude.

The change of Administration necessarily involved the adjournment of the House of Commons; and no material business was proposed till September 16. Lord John passed the intervening fortnight at Woburn; and, as after the resumption of business Sir R. Peel decided on merely dealing with matters which it was impossible to postpone, Lord John did not consider his own presence in London necessary. On September 26 he set out for Endsleigh, where he remained with wife, children, and step-children, till the latter half of November. At Endsleigh he learned the death of two old colleagues, both successively Governors-General of Canada—Lord Durham and Lord Sydenham. Writing to Lord John on March 26, 1840, Lord Durham said—

I sincerely rejoice in Thomson's success. He will have already told you that I contributed to it to the utmost of my ability.

He is a fortunate person in having at the Colonial Office one who has the ability to comprehend the intricate subject and the spirit to support him in his efforts to unravel it.

During his last illness Lord Sydenham dictated his will to Mr. Dowling, one of his suite, bequeathing to Lord John—

the sum of 500*l.*, of which I beg his acceptance as a remembrance of my friendship.

And he added—so Mr. Dowling wrote to Mr. Poulett Scrope, Lord Sydenham's elder brother—

Dowling, Lord John is the noblest man it has ever been my fortune to follow.[1]

On leaving Endsleigh Lord John went to London. But he did not return to the old house in Wilton Crescent which he had occupied since the date of his first marriage. He

[1] The late Sir B. Hawes, on leaving the House of Commons in 1851 to become Deputy Secretary of War, wrote to Lord John, 'I have had the privilege of holding office under one whom for years I looked up to, and whom I never dreamed of knowing or serving; but whom, having known and served under, I can join in Lord Sydenham's admiration of in almost the same words.'

entered the house at the corner of Chesham Place, which he had himself built, which was just completed, and which is now the property of his great-nephew, Lord Tavistock. After a few days' stay in London, Lord and Lady John proceeded to Bowood, joining a party which has already been commemorated both in the memoirs of Mr. Moore and in the diary of Mr. Greville. The greater part of January they passed at Woburn, returning to London towards the end of the month to meet the King of Prussia at a series of entertainments, and to prepare for the session of 1842.

CHAPTER XV.

IN OPPOSITION.

IT is not necessary to follow Lord John Russell's career during the first four years of the Parliament of 1841 with the care with which it seemed desirable to describe his conduct during the Parliaments of 1835 and 1837. In the one case he was the statesman who both framed and expounded the policy of the Administration; in the other he was only the leader of a disorganised Opposition, unable always to command the obedience of his nominal supporters.

At the commencement of 1842 Lord John did not venture on calling his political followers together. He was afraid that their meeting might disclose, and perhaps emphasise, the differences which existed among them; and he had to content himself with the private counsel of his own immediate friends instead of large gatherings of the various sections of the Liberal party.

His difficulties were increased by the conduct of his great opponent. The work which Sir Robert Peel had to do in 1842 was exactly suited to his knowledge and his capacity. The financial and commercial measures of his Administration were, indeed, open to the reproach that they were inconsistent with the principles which had usually been associated with the Conservative party. Discontented Tories could complain that Sir Robert had caught the Whigs bathing and walked away with their clothes. But the measures of the Minister were framed with a breadth, and propounded with a skill, which no preceding financier, since the death of Mr. Pitt, had displayed; and, in consequence, if they elicited murmurs from the Conservative back benches, commended themselves to the good sense of the country.

Thus Lord John Russell found the difficulty of his own task increased by the dissensions of his friends and the capacity of his opponent. He had to face an army superior in number to his own, and he was uncertain whether he might not be exposed to a raking fire from his own flanks. 'The condition of the Whig party,' wrote no mean authority, 'was absolutely forlorn; it was spoken of as a corpse; it was treated as a phantom.' But the author of the 'Runnymede Letters' had at last learned the true merits of the statesman whom he had described six years before as an 'insect.' He added, 'With numbers scarcely exceeding one-sixth of the House, in a Parliament of their own summoning, the Whigs were sustained alone by the dignity of Lord John Russell.'

Three great measures were proposed by Sir Robert Peel in 1842. (1) He devised a new sliding-scale for corn; (2) he imposed an income tax; (3) with its aid he terminated the deficit which he had inherited from his predecessors, and concurrently revised the whole customs tariff. Lord John fought the battle of a moderate fixed duty on corn against the new sliding-scale; and he argued that, if the duties on foreign timber and foreign sugar had been sufficiently lowered, the Minister could have obtained adequate revenue without resorting to so unpopular a measure as the income tax. In each case he was unsuccessful. The new Parliament had been elected to support Sir Robert Peel; it was not likely to give his opponent a victory at the very outset.

Obviously unable to make any impression on the House, in which Sir Robert Peel was supported by an overwhelming majority, Lord John did not think it necessary to remain in London till the end of the session. Parliament did not conclude its labours till the 17th of August; but on the 13th of July, Lord John, with his wife and two children, left London for Minto.

Mr. Vernon Smith wrote to him—

> Your absence during the last part of the session has been much lamented by all your friends as an injustice to your party and yourself. On the whole the session seems to have raised Free Trade principles to their zenith, and to have reduced the Whig party to its nadir. You are the only man who can give us a Resurgat.

Lord John remained at Minto till the middle of August, when he set out for Endsleigh, stopping on the way at Auckland Castle, Wentworth, Chatsworth, Gloucester, and Taunton. At Taunton, which the travellers reached on August 28, they were joined by young Lord Ribblesdale; and at Endsleigh on the following day they found Lord Ribblesdale's three sisters well and merry. During the previous autumn at Endsleigh, Lord John had resumed his literary labours. Work, indeed, there was in abundance for him. Mr. Macaulay wrote to him, at the instance of Mr. Napier, the editor, to ask him to devote some of his leisure to the interests of the 'Edinburgh Review;' and Lord Brougham was anxious that he should undertake a new work on the Constitution of England. Lord John, however, had other literary matters in hand. In the autumn of 1841 he seriously resumed the 'Memoirs of the Affairs of Europe,' which he had discontinued fifteen years before. In the autumn of 1842 he commenced (so Lady Russell has recorded in her diary) another work—a 'History of the Middle Ages,' which was never destined to be completed;[1] while he concurrently undertook the task of editing the correspondence of his great-grandfather, the fourth Duke, writing the slight sketch of the Duke's career to 1748, which forms the preface of the first volume. Thus at Endsleigh he had healthy work to fill up the hours which were not occupied with riding with the children, with studying botany with Lady John, with rambles, gun in hand, through the woods and fields, or with reading aloud to the family. The autumn wore away smoothly and happily till, on November 2, the shortening days and other more urgent reasons compelled a

[1] The first part of this work was privately printed under the title of *The History of the Principal States of Europe*. The chapters in it are headed: 1. 'Italy in the Time of Lorenzo de Medici.' 2. 'France in the Time of Louis XI.' 3. 'France in the Time of Charles VIII. Conquest of Naples.' 4. 'War in Italy. Reign of Charles VIII., concluded.' 5. 'Commencement and Progress of the Reign of Louis XII.' 6. 'Pontificate of Julius II.'

It will be noticed that these introductory chapters suggest that Lord John was reverting to the intention, which he has himself told us he had formed more than twenty years before (see *ante*, p. 100), of writing the history of Europe from the commencement of the fifteenth century.

return to London. The elder children were sent straight to Chesham Place. Lady John was forced to follow more slowly. And Lord John and she, with the two younger children, slept one night at Exeter, passed two days at Nynehead, and a few more at Bowood. They left Bowood in time for Lord John to dine at the Mansion House on November 9; and remained quietly at Chesham Place; where a month afterwards, on December 10, Lady John presented her husband with his eldest son.

When Lady John had sufficiently recovered, the whole party moved to Woburn, where the two younger children had been staying during their stepmother's illness.[1] They found there an immense party; plays were acted on several nights; and Lord John, resuming the old habits of his boyhood, wrote the epilogue. From Woburn they returned by The Grove, Lord Clarendon's, where Mr. Greville and Mr. Charles Buller and others were staying. Mr. Greville wrote of the visit that Mr. Buller 'goes on as if the only purpose in life was to laugh and make others laugh.' But he accords far higher praise to Lord John:—

> John Russell is always agreeable, both from what he contributes himself, and his hearty enjoyment of the contributions of others.[2]

From The Grove they went to Brocket, where they found Lord Melbourne—who had been afflicted with a slight seizure in the previous autumn—'pretty well.' And from Brocket they returned to London, where, on February 6, his eldest daughter's seventh birthday, his little boy was given the name of John.[3]

[1] Lord John ran down occasionally to see his children. Mr. Greville met him there at the end of December 'in very good spirits, more occupied with his children than thoughts of politics and place' (*Memoirs*, pt. ii. vol. ii. p. 131).

[2] *Ibid.* p. 140.

[3] Lord Amberley's god-parents were the Duke of Sussex, the Duke of Bedford, and Lady Minto. I mention the circumstance because many persons may recollect that, in 1838, the Duke of Sussex had a violent quarrel with Lord John, in consequence of the latter opposing an increased grant to him. The Duke's letters are among Lord John's papers. But I have refrained from publishing productions written in great anger. The Duke, however, like other people, was unable to resist Lord John's attractive disposition, and after a year or two the two men were reconciled. The Duke died in the following April.

The session of 1843, which commenced a few days before the christening, was marked by one broad characteristic—an increasing dissatisfaction in the Tory ranks with Sir Robert Peel's policy. Extreme Tories were beginning to complain that the Minister who had been placed in office to pursue a policy of Protection was coquetting with Free Trade. Alarmed at the increasing boldness of the Anti-Corn Law League, they were startled to find that the Ministry was itself admitting Canadian corn into the English markets at a low rate of duty. In consequence the disintegration of the Tory party, which was destined three years later to break up the Ministry, visibly commenced; while the growing disunion on the Government side of the House led to a little closer union in the Liberal ranks. The measures of the Ministry, moreover, drove Lord John's followers into closer co-operation. Sir James Graham, as Home Secretary, introduced a measure for the regulation of factories and the education of factory children. Radical members complained that the Church was the pivot on which the whole scheme turned; Lord John came forward as the champion of religious liberty; and Sir James Graham was compelled first to modify, and then abandon, his Bill. Thus, even in England, affairs were hardly progressing with the Tories in 1843 as smoothly as they had proceeded in 1842; while in Ireland the eternal difficulty had again recurred, and new agitation was leading to the old remedy—fresh coercion.

Alarmed at the agitation which was commencing for Repeal, and which was fomented by a new newspaper, 'The Nation,' which had been recently founded by some young Irishmen of talent, the Government desired to strengthen its position by introducing a new Arms Act. It defended the measure by citing the example of its predecessors, who, through Lord Morpeth, had introduced an Arms Act in 1838, and continued it in subsequent years. Lord John admitted the truth of the argument; but he complained that, while the Conservative Administration was following the late Government in this matter, it was omitting those measures of conciliation which had reconciled the Irish to Lord Morpeth's measure.

Don't tell me that the Arms Act rests entirely upon any precedent afforded by the late Government. If you imitate the one proceeding of the late Government, I wish you would imitate them in other respects.

On June 16,[1] speaking on the motion for going into committee, he used much the same arguments. He could not refuse to support the motion, but he regretted the language which had been used by the spokesmen of the Government. Sir James Graham in particular had 'made it a charge against the Roman Catholics of Ireland that they have not been sufficiently grateful for past concessions, and that they . . . ask still for concessions, when all has been done for them which it is possible for the Legislature to do.' Such language 'coming from the Secretary of State for the Home Department,' could not 'fail to make a deep impression on the people of Ireland.' His own view was very different. 'Though you have done much, and no doubt you have done a great deal . . . you have done so because the debt is large.' But 'there still remains much to be done to establish the people of Ireland in the same condition as to their freedom and privileges as that of the people of England. And if you mean to say further that you are determined to oppose any proposition [for conciliation] that can be made, . . . I say that you will but be imitating that bad example against which I am as ready as any man to exclaim, the example of him who talks about the Saxons and Celts, and endeavours to raise up feelings of embittered resentment by proclaiming an organic and natural difference between the people of England and the people of Ireland.' Ten days afterwards he vainly attempted to induce the Government to reduce the scope of the measure; and, failing to do so, he told Lord Eliot, the Secretary for Ireland, that he should have his hearty opposition.[2]

Lord John's promise was abundantly fulfilled. He bore his part in the numerous and protracted discussions in committee; and endeavoured, though in vain, to mitigate some

[1] *Hansard*, lxx. 55, 63.

[2] *Ibid.* 386. Lord John, a little afterwards, made a forcible appeal for equal justice to Ireland on Mr. Smith O'Brien's motion for a redress of Irish grievances.

of the more objectionable features of the measure. Powerless, however, against the compact majority of the Conservatives, who, divided on their leader's liberal commercial measures, were united in their support of coercion, Lord John thought it useless to wait for the final battle. The Arms Bill was only read a third time on the 9th of August; Parliament was only prorogued on the 24th; but on the 5th Lord John left London. He wrote to Lord Minto—

> Peel is tired and dispirited. Charles Greville says he ought to be blistered and turned out to grass for a year.

He added in another letter that he hoped he should have nothing more to do with politics till February 1844.

After staying a few days at Bowood, and subsequently breaking their journey at Mamhead, Lord and Lady John reached Endsleigh on the 11th of August. They found there Lord John's eldest step-daughter (Mrs. Maurice Drummond) seriously ill; and, as the fever from which she was suffering was prevalent in the neighbourhood, there was further cause for anxiety lest it should spread. After a little time Lady John was herself struck down; and, though the attack in her case was less acute, it was complicated by the circumstance that she was a young mother. In the middle of September the invalids were well enough to be moved, and Lord John carried all the family to Bude. But trouble still dogged his footsteps. Miss Lister, barely recovered from one illness, was seized with scarlet fever; and Lord John, leaving her under her aunt's charge, carried his wife and the children back to Endsleigh. Illness, however, still followed them, and it was not till the end of October that they were able finally to leave, when, turning their faces to the North, they proceeded to Minto.

A few years later, thanks partly to Lord John's own exertions, such an illness would have led to skilled inquiry, and the drains would have been tested and the water analysed to ascertain its cause. The neighbours might thus have derived benefit from the sickness at the great house, and fever might have been defeated by sanitary skill. Sanitary science, however, was hardly known in 1843, and it seemed easier to avoid disease than to track it to its lair. Thus Lord and

Lady John decided that Endsleigh was no place for three families of children, and after this unlucky autumn they went no more to Devonshire.

Lady John had not sickened of the fever on the 18th of August, her husband's fifty-first birthday; and on that day she addressed to him the following beautiful lines, the publication of which she has reluctantly permitted :—

Since last the lingering sun's decline
We watch'd upon this day of joy,
Another, dearer, name is thine,
Oh ! father of my baby boy !
And to the chain so fast and bright,
That bound us heart to heart before,
The year has added in its flight
One little golden link the more.
Millions thy patriot voice attend,
Mine, only mine, thy gentler tone ;
With thee in blissful gaze to bend
This flow'ret o'er is mine alone.
Oh, gently rear it—love it well,
That it may flourish fair and free :
That of its sweetness all may tell,
And dear as thine its birthday be.

Lord and Lady John stayed at Minto till the latter half of September, when they journeyed through Newcastle and York to Althorp, Woburn, and The Grove, only returning to London at the end of January. Lord John's wandering life had naturally interfered with his literary pursuits, and the 'History of the Middle Ages' suffered from his rambles and his wife's illness. Yet in 1843 he published the second volume of the 'Bedford Correspondence,' and he ventured on a literary experiment which proved his courage. He forwarded to the 'Literary Souvenir' a translation of one of the best known passages of the 'Inferno,' the seventy odd lines which tell the story of Francesca and Paolo. The 'English Review,' in an elaborate article on the performance, cited the well-worn joke of Mr. Sydney Smith, that Lord John was ready, with or without ten minutes' notice, to assume the command of the Channel Fleet, and added that he had

attempted an exploit quite as venturesome, and at ten minutes' notice had sat down to translate Dante. The reviewer, of course, did not know, what an old manuscript book proves, that the translation had been made more than twenty-eight years before. It was probably good-naturedly sent to Mr. Watts, the editor of the 'Souvenir,' a gentleman whose connection with the Russell family has already been mentioned. Thus it runs:—

'I fain would speak to that unhappy pair
Who, hand in hand, so lightly float on air.'
In words like these to Maro I express'd
My wish, and thus he granted my request.
'Wait till the shades approach: then name the word
Of love, which rules them: straight you will be heard.'
Soon as I saw the constant ghosts were cast
Near to our station by the baleful blast,
Swift I conjured them, 'By your miseries past,
O! speak.' And, as two doves on wings outspread
Float to their darling nest by fondness led,
So did these sorrowing spirits leave the throng,
Where Dido broods o'er man's unpunish'd wrong,
Nor aught of woe conceal'd, nor aught refused,
Such magic power was in the words I used.
'Oh, pitying stranger that in this dread place
Canst feel for blood-stain'd hearts, had we found grace
With the great Lord of all, we should not cease
To pray his mercy for your future peace,
For you show mercy to our mortal sin.
But stay, while yet the tempest holds its din,
Speak what you list and what you please to know,
And hear our griefs: 'tis all we can bestow.
In lands, where Po with ample torrents flows
To the broad seas, and finds at length repose,
We sprang. There love, by which each gentle breast
Is quickly fired, my Paolo's heart possess'd
For that fair form torn from me in such chill
And cruel fashion as afflicts me still.
True love by love must ever be repaid:
I learn'd to please him, so that still his shade
Is seen e'en here to wander by my side.
For love we lived, for love together died.

But he, by whose unnatural hand we bled,
With Cain shall dwell.' These words the shadow said.
Thoughtful I listen'd ; when I heard the offence
Borne by these gentle souls, in sad suspense
I bent my eyes : the silence Virgil broke,
And question'd of my thoughts : slowly I spoke.
'Alas !' I said, 'how soft and light a train
Of sweet desires led these to endless pain.'
Then, turning round, the lovers I address'd :
'Your griefs, Francesca, weigh upon my breast,
And fill my eyes with tears : vouchsafe to tell,
In love's spring season of fond sighs, what spell
First brought the bud of secret hope to flower,
And taught your hearts the presence of his power?'
'Alas !' she said, 'when only pangs remain,
The memory of past joy is sharpest pain ;
And this your master knows. Yet if desire
So strong and eager prompts you to inquire
Whence sprang our love, the story you shall hear
Tho' every word be follow'd by a tear.
One day, intent to while away the time,
Alone, yet void of fear, as free from crime,
We read of Lancelot's love ; oft from the book
We raised our eyes, and each commingling look
Led to a blush. The story we pursued
Till one short fatal passage all subdued.
For when we read, the lover crown'd with bliss
Her rapturous smile, and his more ardent kiss—
He, who is ever to my side attach'd,
He from my lips a kiss all trembling snatch'd.
No conscious slave our love-sick message bore
Save this frail book : that day we read no more.'
As thus one shadow told the mournful tale,
The other did so feelingly bewail,
That pity check'd my voice, my blood, my breath,
And sunk me to the ground, as one in death.

It was no very difficult matter for the 'English Review,' criticising this version line by line, to show that it contained some inaccurate translations and some redundant epithets.

A man must serve his time in every trade,
Save censure : critics all are ready made,

and do not even require ten minutes' preparation. Yet even the reviewer admitted that some of Lord John's lines were superior to the parallel translations by Lord Byron and Mr. Carey; and surely, if the whole passage be taken, if it be recollected that the words are not the words of the mature statesman of fifty, but of the young author of twenty-three, who, after a singularly desultory education, in which he had only paid slight attention to Italian, was thus occupying his leisure hours, it is permissible to say, 'Let those who can do better condemn the exercise.'

Lord John only returned to town in 1844, on the eve of the meeting of Parliament. But, long before the session began, he had been in correspondence with many of his old colleagues on the course to be taken. Events were moving very rapidly both in England and Ireland. In England free trade in corn was deriving fresh impulse from a public declaration by Lord Spencer that protection was unnecessary, and reciprocity a fallacy.[1] In Ireland the determination of the Government to repress agitation, the prohibition of the meeting at Clontarf, the arrest of Mr. O'Connell, and his trial before a packed jury, were attracting universal attention to the system on which government was conducted.

You ask [so Lord John wrote to Lord Lansdowne on November 11] what measures Parliament should be called upon to adopt. There is one very simple one: to address the Crown to act in the spirit of the resolutions on which the Union was founded and the Act of 1829 By the former of these equality of rights was promised; by the latter it was pretended to be carried into effect. Yet never have the Irish enjoyed what was so solemnly held forth to them as an equivalent for agreeing to the Union. Up to 1829 the Tory party were engaged in preventing the Catholics from having by law the rights of British subjects. From 1835 to 1843 they have been employed in defeating the law which professed to give them those rights. No Catholic is admitted to any office of importance. . . . I should say therefore that the first and most obvious measure to be adopted is to act in good faith; to relinquish that course of fraud by which injustice has been covered over by a pretended and false profession of liberality; in short, to give the Irish now what Mr. Pitt promised them in 1800.

[1] See Lord Spencer's *Memoirs*, p. 555.

. . . The poor instalments we gave from 1835 to 1841 show how ready the Irish are to be satisfied with kind and impartial treatment. The great object is to prevent the establishment of a settled hatred between the two nations, which Lyndhurst and O'Connell have laboured so hard to create.

It was finally determined that, though no amendment should be moved to the Address, Lord John himself should ask for a committee of the whole House to consider the affairs of Ireland. While this decision was being formed, a prominent Liberal, Mr. Charles Buller, took the extreme step of writing, in his own name and in that of Mr. Hawes, to Mr. O'Connell, asking him what could be done. Mr. O'Connell began his reply—

by expressing my total dissent from your opinion that there is a *great* or *strong* party in England favourable to justice to Ireland. . . . Let me, however, not wrangle about the strength of the 'Justice to Ireland' party in England. I will take for granted that it is strong enough to be useful. Upon that supposition I meet at once and candidly your demand to suggest measures that would be satisfactory to the Irish people. I am not telling you what would satisfy me personally, but I will tell you what I know would deprive me of many of my present adherents . . . what I think would mitigate the present ardent desire for repeal.

Firstly, *establishing perfect religious equality*, which could be done in either of two ways: the one would be the paying all religious instructors of Catholics and Episcopalian Protestants; the second way, . . . the right one, the paying neither clergy. . . .

Secondly, . . . to restore the law of landlord and tenant to the state it was in at the time of the Union. There have since the Union (I think) been seven statutes passed enhancing the landlord's power of distraint and eviction. . . .

Thirdly, the county franchise is becoming totally extinct. . . . The basis . . . must be extended to the people at large. . . .

Fourthly, the Corporate Reform Bill for Ireland should be made equally potential with the corporate reform for England and Scotland. . . .

Fifthly, our town constituencies should be rendered more extensive; and the old freemen, an ancient political nuisance, should be abolished. . . .

Sixthly, the income tax upon Irish absentees should be increased five-fold.

Seventhly, the question of fixity of tenure should be taken into the most deliberate consideration. . . .

I have thus, my dear Buller, candidly given you the elements of the destruction of my political power. . . . But I do not expect any important result from your exertions. The British people will think of doing justice to Ireland, as they did to America, when too late. . . . The Whigs won't do it: the principal part of them will necessarily be under the control of Lord John Russell; and he will never permit anything like justice to be done to the Catholic people of this country. I know him well. He has a thorough, contemptuous, Whig hatred of the Irish. He has a strong and, I believe, conscientious abhorrence of Popery everywhere, but . . . particularly of Irish Popery. . . . You cannot succeed, it is impossible. Your countrymen are too deeply imbued in national antipathy. You have injured us too deeply, too cruelly, ever to forgive us.

Such in Mr. O'Connell's opinion was the price at which Irish affection might have been purchased in 1844. So moderate a man as Lord Clarendon thought that upon every one of the requirements, with the exception perhaps of the absentee tax, something ought to be done, and he added (writing to Lord John)—

I am sure that if you were in power, notwithstanding his stupid ungrateful accusation, you would soon bring him to terms; and, by doing what was strictly just, quash the cry for Repeal.

How untrue Mr. O'Connell's accusation was, Lord John had soon an opportunity of proving. On the 13th of February he made his promised motion on Ireland. In words which Mr. O'Connell himself might have used, he said—

We have before us the notorious fact that Ireland is filled with troops; and that the barracks, in which these troops are posted, have been fortified. We have heard too, only this morning, that . . . preparations have been made as if the Government were in hourly expectation of civil war. We have before us, in short, the fact that Ireland is occupied, and not governed, by the present Administration. In England the government, as it should be, . . . is a government of opinion; the government of Ireland is notoriously a government of force.[1]

The time had arrived for substituting opinion for force;

[1] *Hansard*, lxxii. 684.

and Lord John, recollecting Mr. O'Connell's advice to Mr. Charles Buller, declared that he was in favour of putting the Established Church, 'the Catholics, and Protestants, and Presbyterians' on a footing of perfect equality. He did not adopt the course which Mr. O'Connell would have preferred, of disendowing the Church; he selected the alternative of offering endowment to the Roman Catholic clergy. He was aware that such a policy might expose the clergy of that Church to the taunt that they were accepting 'bribes to abandon the interests of their flocks as regarded their civil rights.' This only convinced Lord John that, in endowing the Roman Catholic clergy, the Irish people must be concurrently placed on a footing of equality with the English. If we begin by giving them these civil rights, and so conciliate the affections of the lay portion of the Roman Catholic population, I do not despair that, with their willing consent, we may be able to induce their clergy to form part of a general Church Establishment.'

Equality of rights for the people, equality of endowment for the clergy—such was the broad and generous policy which Lord John devised for Ireland in February 1844. Mr. Greville writes of this speech—

> Lord John Russell opened the debate in a speech three and a half hours long, the greater part of which was very good. . . . John Russell went further, and spoke more decisively than he had ever done before, and declared for a complete equality between Catholics, Anglicans, and Presbyterians.

The Duke of Bedford, writing on February 15, said—

> I hear the highest praises of your speech from our friends, and wish you joy of it with all my heart. I can't say how much pleasure it has given me.

One remarkable incident occurred during the course of the debate. On February 15, Mr. O'Connell, fresh from his trial before a packed jury in Dublin, entered the House, and was received with rounds of applause from the Liberal benches. Lord John shook hands with him; and the great Irish agitator, who, only a month before, had declared that nothing was to be expected from Lord John, said to him, 'I

thank you for your admirable speech; it makes up to us for much that we have gone through.' But, as the debate wore on, it was evident that Lord John's policy was impracticable from the reluctance of his own followers. English Nonconformists and Scotch Presbyterians were equally opposed to endowing 'the priests of Baal;' and, though the discussion was protracted over nine nights, Lord John's motion in the end was defeated by a large majority. The position of the Administration was strengthened by the results of the debate. Sir Robert Peel was able to address himself to the business of the session. The great commercial legislation, however, for which the year is remarkable, and which settled the position of the Bank of England and the issue of paper currency, does not properly fall within the scope of this memoir; and it is sufficient here to refer to two questions on which the Ministers suffered defeats: one of them had reference to factory legislation, the other to sugar.

Though the Whigs had been defeated in 1841 on the sugar duties, it was plain that it was impossible for the Ministers to leave them unaltered. The consumption of sugar was checked by the inability of British colonies to increase the supply; and, in the interests of the consumer, it was necessary to obtain an additional quantity of sugar from elsewhere. Precluded, by the arguments which he had used in 1841, from lowering the duties on slave-grown sugar, Sir Robert Peel decided on admitting foreign free-grown sugar on comparatively easy terms. Instead of keeping all foreign sugar out of the market by the prohibitive duty of 63*s.*, he retained that duty for slave-grown sugar, and placed a duty of only 34*s.*, or 10*s.* higher than the colonial duty, on foreign sugar the produce of free labour. This curious distinction had not much to recommend it; and Lord John at once endeavoured to place all foreign sugars in the same category. He was beaten by a considerable majority. But Mr. Miles, the Conservative member for Bristol, thereupon proposed another arrangement. He desired to cheapen the price of sugar by lowering the duty on colonial sugar to 20*s.*, and the new duty on foreign sugar from 34*s.* to 30*s.* Lord John decided on supporting a proposal which, as far as it went, was calculated

to reduce the price of an important article of food; and, with his assistance, Mr. Miles succeeded in defeating the Government. Sir Robert, impatient at his defeat, insisted, under a threat of resignation, on his party retracing their steps. But his decision strained the allegiance of the Tories to the point of snapping; 'the dissatisfaction was universal;' and 'for some time the fall of the Government was considered inevitable.'

Discontent in the Tory ranks was increased by the circumstance that, on a previous occasion in the same session, the Minister had compelled his followers to surrender their own opinions to his judgment. It will be recollected that in 1843 Sir James Graham had introduced a Bill, which he had been compelled to withdraw, for the regulation of factories and the education of children employed in them. Early in 1844 he reintroduced the measure; omitting, however, from it the education clauses. Lord Ashley endeavoured to engraft the ten hours clause on this Bill, and succeeded in defeating the Government in two successive divisions. Lord John wound up the debate in favour of the amendment, taking Lord Palmerston with him into the lobby. Only a year before, Lord Ashley had made one of those exaggerated and intemperate statements in his diary, which his biographer has unfortunately not repressed, and had declared that he 'had thought for some years that Peel and John Russell are the most criminal of mankind; they are invested with enormous powers of doing good to the human race, and they utterly neglect them.'[1] It is not necessary to inquire whether Lord Ashley's conscience smote him in 1844 for recording the uncharitable verdict of 1843. But it required no ordinary courage in a Whig leader to support the ten hours clause. Lord Fitzwilliam, writing to the Duke of Bedford, formally complained of his brother's conduct; and declared that, if a Ministry were formed on the principle of limiting the hours of labour, he would do his best to get rid of it.

The session of 1845 was marked by the same broad characteristic as that of 1844. Sir Robert Peel still retained his predominance; but he held his own amidst the increasing

[1] *Life of Lord Shaftesbury*, i. 477.

dissatisfaction of his friends, and through the forbearance of his opponents. Never before, indeed, had his measures been so bold or so skilful. The Budget of 1845 was a worthy complement to the Budget of 1842; and, though it retained the vicious principle, to which the Minister was pledged, of imposing heavy differential duties on slave-grown sugar, it did more to free trade from the fetters which shackled it than any measure which had been proposed for a hundred years. But the Budget was only one feature of the Minister's policy. Warned, at last, by the attitude of the Irish, and the arguments of Lord John, he introduced three great Irish measures. He proposed (1) to raise the status of the Roman Catholic clergy by giving increased endowment to Maynooth, the college at which the priests were chiefly educated; (2) to promote the higher education of the Irish people by establishing colleges, Queen's colleges as they were called, in three important Irish towns; (3) to give security to the Irish tenant by affording him compensation for unexhausted improvements in accordance with some of the recommendations of a commission which he had himself appointed, and which, from the name of its chairman, is known as the Devon Commission.

These great measures, great not merely from what they did, but from the principles which they introduced, were received with a shout of dismay from the Tory party. The last of them, introduced by Lord Stanley into the Lords, was practically stifled by the select committee to which it was referred, and never reached the Commons. The other measures were mainly carried through Lord John's assistance. How effectual his support was may be inferred from the circumstance that, on the third reading of the Maynooth Bill, the Minister actually failed to command a majority of his own supporters.[1] How gentlemanlike it was may be known from Mr. Greville's description:—

I was at Newmarket while the Maynooth debate was going on. . . .

[1] Mr. Tufnell, writing to Lord John, said that the third reading of the Bill was carried by a majority consisting of 148 Tories and 169 Liberals against a minority comprising 149 Tories and 35 Liberals.

The ultra-Tories grew more and more rabid, and Disraeli made one of his brilliant attacks on Peel. . . . Then came the speech of Macaulay, which was very fine, and ended also with a severe, but grave and dignified, Philippic against Peel. . . . On the last night John Russell and Peel spoke. The former made a speech which has excited universal admiration and applause. It was perfect, not for its eloquence or any remarkable display of ability; but for its tone, temper, discretion, and propriety. It was exactly what it ought to have been, neither more or less; it was calculated to do good, and it has raised him immensely in public estimation.

It is a melancholy reflection that, while these two great men, who towered above all other contemporary statesmen, were thus steadily being drawn together, they remained in another sense apart. It is perhaps the inevitable result of political rivalry that men are more apt to study the faults than the virtues of their opponents, and Lord John, at least when he was removed from the strife and excitement, was alive to this circumstance. Thus, after reflecting, in a letter to Lord Minto on December 12, 1844, on one of Peel's measures, he added—

I should be glad, however, to learn what you think, as the question is an important one, and constant battles against Peel and Graham may have blinded me to their merits.

During the summers of 1844 and 1845, Lord John spent much of his time in a house—Unsted Wood, near Godalming—which he hired. Unfortunately his enjoyment of country life was marred by the circumstance that Lady John, losing health in the summer of 1844, was, for the next two years, afflicted with a tedious and painful illness. Lord John in consequence was frequently compelled to leave his wife at Unsted while he returned to his Parliamentary duties in London. On one of these occasions, in 1845 Lady John sent her husband what she herself called some nonsense verses :—

I suppose, my dear John, that you will not object
If the path of dull prose for awhile I neglect,
For a page or two spread my poetical pinions,
And waft to you some of the thoughts and opinions,
Occupations, amusements, and trifling concerns
Of your household, your wife, and your half-dozen bairns.

And so on. Lord John was engaged to dine at Blackwall, but on his return home he scribbled off an answer, from which the following lines are extracted :—

> From your journal in verse, my dearest of dears,
> The whole course of your evening most clearly appears,
> And I will endeavour your evening at home
> To repay with your husband's 'invited to roam ;'
> To roam to the banks of bark-covered Thames,
> Where prospect and provender hold forth their claims :
> Now viewing the river, now sipping the wine,
> Enchanted to gaze, and delighted to dine,
> Where (excepting the chaplain) there's nothing divine.
> . . . . . .
> The dinner was served to the prime of the city.
> We dined at Lloyd's Register Shipping Committee ;
> For each merchant of London has twenty at least
> Of various employments : in each has a feast :
> An alderman now, and now a trustee,
> Now director, now one of the Thames committee ;
> But in every character, rank, post, or station,
> He always eats well for the good of the nation.
> . . . . . .
> I've no time for the speeches : your husband made two ;
> The chairman was witty ; and Masterman,[1] who
> Is my colleague and rival, gave Robinson's [2] health,
> Who rejoiced in the company's wisdom and wealth.
> Thus ended the banquet of innocent pleasure,
> And the cost was defrayed from the surplus of treasure.
> Then home as I went to my dwelling in Chesham,
> May such honest folks flourish and good success bless 'em.
> So my journey's made out, I've not stopp'd to dawdle,
> And hasten to sign, Your affectionate Caudle.

As the summer of 1845 wore on, and Lady John grew no better, Lord John was tempted to remove her to Scotland. They took with them Lord Ribblesdale, one of his sisters (Mrs. Warburton), and the baby (Lord Amberley). On their way North they stopped at Gisburne, Lord Ribblesdale's seat in

[1] Mr. Masterman, the Conservative member for the City, was at the top of the poll in 1842.

[2] I presume Lord Ripon.

Yorkshire, where the tenants gave the young Lord a touching reception—'flags, bells, guns, crowds, hurrahs!' Still travelling slowly, they broke the journey at Settle and Penrith. But on reaching Minto Lady John was evidently so much worse that Lord John was compelled to give up a projected trip to the Highlands, and take his wife for medical advice to Edinburgh. There she was detained by illness till the following April, first in an hotel, and afterwards at Lauriston Castle, which Mr. Rutherford placed at Lord John's disposal. While in Edinburgh Lord John received an honorary degree from his old University and the freedom of the city.[1] But his residence there had one consequence of a more public character: it gave a name to the 'Edinburgh Letter.'

Before referring to the circumstances under which that letter was written, it is desirable to mention a few other matters of more personal interest. To Lord John 1845 was a year of sorrow. He was harassed and depressed by his wife's long and continuous illness, while he was destined to lose many of the friends and colleagues with whom he had lived in closest communion. Mr. Sydney Smith died early in the year;[2] on July 18 Lord Howick wrote to him to announce Lord Grey's death; in October he learned that Lord Spencer had been prematurely taken. Lord Spencer's brother said with much truth to him—

[1] In January 1846 Lord John received the freedom of the city of Glasgow. I have not attempted to enumerate all the honours of this kind conferred on him by various municipalities.

[2] Mr. Sydney Smith occasionally turned his joke against Lord John. 'I like, my dear Lord, the road you are travelling; but I don't like the pace you are driving: too similar to that of the son of Nimshi. I always feel inclined to cry out, "Gently, John, gently downhill"' (Sydney Smith's *Works*, iii. 160). Or again in the same letter: 'The reformers of the Church are no longer archbishops and bishops, but Lord John Russell: not those persons to whom the Crown has entrusted the task, but Lord Martin Luther, bred and born in our own island, and nourished by the Woburn spoils and confiscation of the Church' (*ibid.* p. 157). But Mr. Sydney Smith could not even refuse an invitation to dinner without a joke. He wrote to Lord John in 1843, 'I should have had great pleasure in dining with you, my dear John, but I am engaged to dine with Mrs. S., the singing woman. Not that I have any pleasure in the voice of singing men or singing women; but, as Adam said when they found him in breeches, the woman asked me and I did eat. . . .'

In public and in private life your courses and your affections have been for many years cemented: and you are among those fully aware of the many beautiful virtues which adorned my dear brother's mind, and of the purity and integrity of his conduct.

What Lord John thought, however, of Lord Grey's services and Lord Spencer's conduct need not be inferred from casual correspondence. Almost immediately after hearing of Lord Spencer's death he wrote to Mr. Napier, the editor of the 'Edinburgh Review,' proposing that he should contribute an article on the character of these two men in the great Whig periodical; and the article, which occupied his leisure hours at Lauriston, and which appeared in January 1846, is a proof of the veneration and affection with which he regarded the memory of his friends.

But a still more severe blow was preparing for him. In the middle of November Lady Holland died. No doubt many of those who enjoyed Lady Holland's hospitality resented her dictatorial manners, and were annoyed at her interference in affairs which did not immediately concern her. But it was not so with Lord John. From his childhood he had lived with Lord and Lady Holland on terms of affectionate intimacy. At Holland House he had been 'treated as a son.' He wrote to Lord Lansdowne—

The many years she has shown the greatest kindness and affection to me, make this a bitter affliction.

Lady Holland made him her executor, and left him for his life the very considerable estate which she enjoyed in her own right at Kennington.[1] Some people—Lord Fortescue among them—forgetting, for the moment, that Lady Holland had property in the south of London, took Kennington for Kensington, and were disposed to question the propriety of Holland House passing away from the family. But, whatever

[1] Lady Holland communicated her intention to Lord John beforehand in the enclosed memorandum:—

'The disposition of the Kennington estate, made in my will in favour of Lord John Russell, is made by me in consequence not only of my warm affection for Lord John, but of an intention previously entertained by my dear Lord to make a similar disposition of Ampthill, and I hope Lord John will accept the gift as a token of the affection and goodwill of both.'

others may have thought, those who had most right to complain acquiesced at once in the bequest which was thus made. Lord Holland's and Lady Lilford's letters to Lord John continued to breathe the warmest affection; while, as Lord John wrote—

Charles Fox wrote me a very kind letter, and was as cordial as possible. He promises to live in kindness with me all the rest of our lives, and we have always been on terms which make such a promise no idle word.

Lord John left his sick wife to attend Lady Holland's funeral. He slept at Newcastle on the 23rd of November, after a cold and tiresome journey of fourteen hours and a half; and, leaving the following morning at half-past eight, reached Woburn at eight in the evening.

Such are the wonders of railway travelling. In old times I should have been all night and all day on the road. . . . I went this morning to the sad ceremony. Lord Holland, Allen, and now Lady Holland are all buried at Millbrook in a small village church. When I remember the many days of youth and manhood I passed with them, it seems as if my life was a dream.

Before returning to Edinburgh, Lord John paid a flying visit to Unsted, where the children had been left, intending to take his eldest step-daughter and his eldest daughter back with him to Scotland. His youngest daughter, however, cried so much at the idea of a fresh separation that, though he said to himself—'Now I will show how firm I can be. I will be very hard-hearted,'—he could not 'keep it up,' and he accordingly carried the child with her sisters to Scotland.

He was at the time in a state of unusual depression. Lady Holland's death, his wife's prolonged illness, and other anxieties, were all weighing on his spirits. He wrote from Unsted—

I hope God has in store for us some happy days, but we must be resigned to the disposition He is pleased to make of us. This year has been a trying one; and, when I look at the sofa in this room, I recollect the sad hours you have passed upon it. At the same time you have been able to read and talk, and have had the full enjoyment

of your mental faculties throughout your illness. This is a blessing for which we must be thankful.

With such thoughts he set out on his long journey to Scotland, reaching Edinburgh after a week's absence on the 29th of November.

There was nothing in the newspapers when he left England to make him doubt the expediency of his return to Scotland. Yet at that very moment a political crisis was being prepared with startling rapidity, and events were in progress which were almost immediately to necessitate his return to London. And to these events Lord John himself had given an irresistible impulse.

It is not necessary in this memoir to relate the details of the failure of the potato crop in 1845. It is sufficient to say that it convinced the two first statesmen in England that the time for sliding scales and fixed duties was over, and that when famine was in prospect Protection was doomed. Sir Robert Peel hastily summoned the Cabinet to deliberate on the measures required; while Lord John wrote the following letter to his constituents from Edinburgh.

TO THE ELECTORS OF THE CITY OF LONDON.

Gentlemen,—The present state of the country, in regard to its supply of food, cannot be viewed without apprehension. Forethought and bold precaution may avert any serious evils; indecision and procrastination may produce a state of suffering which it is frightful to contemplate.

Three weeks ago it was generally expected that Parliament would be immediately called together. The announcement that Ministers were prepared at that time to advise the Crown to summon Parliament, and to propose on their first meeting a suspension of the import duties on corn, would have caused orders at once to be sent to various ports of Europe and America for the purchase and transmission of grain for the consumption of the United Kingdom. An Order in Council dispensing with the law was neither necessary nor desirable. No party in Parliament would have made itself responsible for the obstruction of a measure so urgent and so beneficial.

The Queen's Ministers have met, and separated, without affording us any promise of such seasonable relief.

It becomes us, therefore, the Queen's subjects, to consider how we can best avert, or at all events mitigate, calamities of no ordinary magnitude.

Two evils require your consideration. One of these is the disease in the potatoes, affecting very seriously parts of England and Scotland, and committing fearful ravages in Ireland.

The extent of this evil has not yet been ascertained, and every week, indeed, tends either to reveal unexpected disease, or to abate in some districts the alarm previously entertained. But there is one misfortune peculiar to the failure in this particular crop. The effect of a bad corn harvest is, in the first place, to diminish the supply in the market, and to raise the price. Hence diminished consumption, and the privation of incipient scarcity, by which the whole stock is more equally distributed over the year, and the ultimate pressure is greatly mitigated. But the fear of the breaking out of this unknown disease in the potatoes induces the holders to hurry into the market, and thus we have at one and the same time rapid consumption and impending deficiency—scarcity of the article and cheapness of price. The ultimate suffering must thereby be rendered far more severe than it otherwise would be. The evil to which I have adverted may be owing to an adverse season, to a mysterious disease in the potato, to want of science or of care in propagating the plant. In any of these cases Government is no more subject to blame for the failure of the potato crop than it was entitled to credit for the plentiful corn harvests which we have lately enjoyed.

Another evil, however, under which we are suffering, is the fruit of Ministerial counsel and Parliamentary law. It is the direct consequence of an Act of Parliament, passed three years ago, on the recommendation of the present advisers of the Crown. By this law grain of all kinds has been made subject to very high duties on importation. These duties are so contrived that the worse the quality of the corn the higher is the duty ; so that when good wheat rises to 70*s.* a quarter, the average price of all wheat is 57*s.* or 58*s.*, and the duty 15*s.* or 14*s.* a quarter. Thus the corn barometer points to fair, while the ship is bending under a storm.

This defect was pointed out many years ago by writers on the corn laws, and was urged upon the attention of the House of Commons when the present Act was under consideration.

But I confess that on the general subject my views have in the course of twenty years undergone a great alteration. I used to be of opinion that corn was an exception to the general rules of political economy ; but observation and experience have convinced me that we ought to abstain from all interference with the supply of food.

Neither a government nor a legislature can ever regulate the corn market with the beneficial effects which the entire freedom of sale and purchase are sure of themselves to produce.

I have for several years endeavoured to obtain a compromise on this subject. In 1839 I voted for a committee of the whole House, with the view of supporting the substitution of a moderate fixed duty for the sliding scale. In 1841 I announced the intention of the then Government of proposing a fixed duty of 8*s.* a quarter. In the past session I proposed the imposition of some lower duty. These propositions were successively rejected. The present First Lord of the Treasury met them in 1839, 1840, and 1841 by eloquent panegyrics of the existing system—the plenty it had caused, the rural happiness it had diffused. He met the proposition for diminished protection in the same way in which he had met the offer of securities for Protestant interests in 1817 and 1825—in the same way in which he met the proposal to allow Manchester, Leeds, and Birmingham to send members to Parliament in 1830.

The result of resistance to qualified concessions must be the same in the present instance as in those I have mentioned. It is no longer worth while to contend for a fixed duty. In 1841 the Free Trade party would have agreed to a duty of 8*s.* a quarter on wheat, and after a lapse of years this duty might have been further reduced, and ultimately abolished. But the imposition of any duty at present, without a provision for its extinction within a short period, would but prolong a contest already sufficiently fruitful of animosity and discontent. The struggle to make bread scarce and dear, when it is clear that part, at least, of the additional price goes to increase rent, is a struggle deeply injurious to an aristocracy which (this quarrel once removed) is strong in property, strong in the construction of our legislature, strong in opinion, strong in ancient associations, and the memory of immortal services.

Let us, then, unite to put an end to a system which has been proved to be the blight of commerce, the bane of agriculture, the source of bitter divisions among classes, the cause of penury, fever, mortality, and crime among the people.

But if this end is to be achieved, it must be gained by the unequivocal expression of the public voice. It is not to be denied that many elections for cities and towns in 1841, and some in 1845, appear to favour the assertion that Free Trade is not popular with the great mass of the community. The Government appear to be waiting for some excuse to give up the present corn law. Let the people, by petition by address, by remonstrance, afford them the excuse they seek. Let the Ministry propose such a revision of the taxes as in

their opinion may render the public burdens more just and more equal; let them add any other provisions which caution and even scrupulous forbearance may suggest; but let the removal of restrictions on the admission of the main articles of food and clothing used by the mass of the people be required, in plain terms, as useful to all great interests, and indispensable to the progress of the nation.—I have the honour to be, Gentlemen, your obedient servant,

J. RUSSELL.

Edinburgh: November 22, 1845.

The letter had been hardly completed when Lord John left Edinburgh to attend Lady Holland's funeral; he left it with Lady John to copy and send to the 'Morning Chronicle,' and he read it for the first time in print in his own house in Chesham Place. Writing thence to Lady John, he noticed that the Cabinet had met. But he added that he assumed that it had met to discuss the Oregon question. He could not, of course, know that the Minister had already proposed to suspend the corn laws, to summon Parliament, and to deliberately review the whole question of agricultural protection. He could not foresee that his own letter was destined to quicken his rival's action; that the Minister, unable to carry with him a united Cabinet, was on the eve of resignation; and that her Majesty was about to charge him with the task of forming an Administration.

Nine days after Lord John's return to Edinburgh, on December 8, while he was reading to his wife the proof sheets of the article which he had written for the 'Edinburgh Review,' he received the Queen's summons to repair to Osborne, where she was residing, as she desired to see him 'on matters of great importance.' He set out on the following morning, slept that night at Newcastle, and reached Chesham Place on the 10th.

Chesham Place: December 10, 1845.

I got here at half-past eight, after a rapid journey by railroad. As we came along all the passengers were very anxious to know the news and bought newspapers. . . . I played the innocent looker-on. It is very sad, this moment, when many will think me at the height of my ambition. But when I think of you and your many trials, and the children with their ailments to distract you when I cannot share your anxieties—it is all very sad. I doubt too of the will of the

country to go through with it; and then I shall have done mischief by calling on them.

I saw Mr. Bright at one of the stations. He spoke much of the enthusiasm. God save and preserve us all. I hope to hear good accounts of you and Toza.[1]

He added the next day from Osborne—

Well, I am here, and have seen her Majesty. It is proposed to me to form a Government; and nothing can be more gracious than the manner in which this has been done. Likewise, Sir Robert Peel has placed his views on paper, and they are such as very much to facilitate my task.

Can I do so wild a thing? For this purpose, and to know whether it is wild or not, I must consult my friends, and especially Lansdowne. Here end politics. I hope you have not suffered from anxiety and the desolation of our domestic prospects.

Lady John replied on the 13th—

I have just read your note which I so anxiously expected from Osborne House. No, my dearest, it is not a wild thing. It is a great duty which you will nobly perform; and, with all my regrets—with the conviction that private happiness to the degree we have enjoyed it is at an end if you are Prime Minister—still I sincerely hope that no timid friend will dissuade you from at least trying what you have yourself called upon the country to help you in. If I liked it better, I should feel less certain that it was a duty. If you had not written that letter you might perhaps have made an honourable escape; but now I see none.

She added on the 14th—

I am as eager and anxious lying here on my sofa—a broken-down, useless bit of rubbish—as if I were well and strong, and in the midst of the turmoil. And I am proud to find that even the prospect of what you too truly call the 'desolation of our domestic prospects,' though the words go to my very heart of hearts, cannot shake my wish that you should make the attempt. My mind is made up. . . . My ambition is that you should be the head of the most moral and religious government the country has ever had.

Lord John's friends, who met at Chesham Place on the 12th of December, were unanimous in thinking that nothing

[1] The pet name for his youngest daughter (afterwards Lady Victoria Villiers), whom he had left with a bad cough.

could justify the formation of a Whig Government except the avowed inability of Sir Robert Peel to carry on the Administration, and the unwillingness of his colleagues, who differed from him, to form a Protectionist Cabinet. Lord John accompanied by Lord Lansdowne explained on the 14th this decision to the Queen, who had now returned to Windsor. The Queen, after communicating with Sir Robert, was able to convey to Lord John satisfactory assurances on both these points, as well as a promise of Sir Robert's co-operation 'in effecting a just and comprehensive settlement of the question at issue.' Lord John was naturally encouraged by this communication. The few friends whom he had collected at Chesham Place agreed by nine votes to five to go on with the formation of a Ministry; and the minority, which comprised Lord Lansdowne, Lord Clarendon, Lord Auckland, Lord Monteagle, and the Duke of Bedford, reluctantly yielded their opinion to the majority. Lord John wrote to his wife on the 18th—

I believe—indeed, I think it certain—that we shall come into office after all. Sir Robert Peel refuses to pledge himself to anything, but gives the fairest assurance of general support on the subject of the Corn Laws. We have had a meeting here, and I am going to Windsor Castle again to-day. The whole affair is so harassing, that I know not what will become of me.

But relief was nearer than he thought. He added the next day—

It is all at an end. Howick would not serve with Lord Palmerston as Foreign Secretary, and it was impossible for me to go on unless I had both. I am very happy . . . at the result. I think that for the present it will tend much to our happiness; and power may come, some day or other, in a less odious shape.

Lord Grey was not in London when Lord John held the first meeting of his friends at Chesham Place. But he arrived in time to be present on the 15th. His arrival introduced difficulty. Lord John wrote to Lady John on the 15th—

My brother [the Duke] said as he went away [on the 12th], 'It is well Howick was not here, for we should have had a difference of

opinion ;' and so it has turned out. He had not been in my room five minutes before he declared a strong difference of opinion.

Lord Grey had, in fact, desired a more uncompromising policy than Lord John was himself, at first, inclined to.

Belgrave Square: December 16, 1845.

My dear Lord John,—I cannot say how much I rejoiced at what was settled to-day. I fear I urged with undue vehemence yesterday my objections to the different course which was then talked of; if so, pray excuse me, as I was, I confess, as much surprised as grieved to find that you were thinking of any half measure.

I anticipate that the result of what you have now done will be that you will be called upon to form an Administration, and the object of my now writing to you is most earnestly to press upon you the extreme importance of the utmost caution in the steps you take for that purpose. If you succeed in making the best possible arrangement which the materials at your command admit of, you still will have a severe and doubtful battle to fight; and I am sure you cannot afford to lose any strength by not filling your offices as well as you can. You, therefore, really owe it to the cause, to yourself, and to your friends, to allow no deference for the personal objects of others to interfere with your making the arrangement best calculated to secure for your Government the largest possible measure of public confidence and support. I shall not trouble you with any uncalled-for and officious advice as to particular appointments: it is for you, and for you only, to determine how the parts are to be cast, and it is only when you have done so that those whom you ask to join you will have the right of desiring to know the whole arrangement, and of considering whether it is one in which they can concur. But, without obtruding upon you impertinent advice, I hope you will allow me to express my conviction that you ought, above all things, to guard against giving to the public an impression that your Administration is a mere revival, with as little alteration as possible, of the last Whig Government. That Government had, justly or unjustly, totally lost the confidence of the public, and had become so unpopular that even now the recollection of it is one of the chief difficulties with which you have to deal. With respect to myself, I am anxious to add that, if you can dispense with my services in the new Administration, you would do me a real favour. . . . I am aware, however, that if you do make a Government, it is not improbable that you may wish me to take a share of the difficulty and responsibility; and if you do, I certainly should feel it my duty not to

refuse, provided in the first place that the Administration was constituted upon the principle I have endeavoured to describe as regards the assignment of offices to particular individuals, and in the next place that it boldly avowed as the guide of its policy what I think the only principles upon which the government of this country can now be usefully conducted. The two fundamental principles to which I think we ought to declare our adherence are : first, that the whole principle of what is called 'protection' is essentially vicious and unjust, and that . . . it will be our object to get rid of all custom-house duties except those imposed exclusively with a view to revenue. . . . The other principle, on which I lay equal stress, is that of establishing complete religious equality in Ireland. . . . I have no objection (quite the contrary) to its being at the same time stated that we are determined to maintain both the Union and the authority of the law by the very strongest means if necessary ; but, believing as I do Ireland to be in a most critical condition, I think it quite indispensable that we should distinctly avow our intention of adopting that policy by which alone I am convinced that it can be saved.

I have thought it right thus early to place before you my views on the great question of the day, because having once experienced the misery of belonging to an Administration not agreed upon fundamental principles of policy. . . . I have long made a firm resolution that no consideration should ever again induce me to take office unless as the member of an Administration cordially united and agreed upon the great public principles by which their policy is to be governed, and which should, in the first instance, be so clearly ascertained as not to admit of any subsequent doubt. . . .—Believe me, yours very truly,

GREY.

Lord Grey's letter naturally necessitated further communication. It was easy enough in the abstract to demand the abolition of all protective duties, and complete religious equality in Ireland. But in practice both conditions raised many points for consideration and discussion. Was it indispensable in the interests of Free Trade to embark on the difficult task of equalising the duties on sugar, or would a measure moving in that direction satisfy Lord Grey? Would, again, complete religious equality in Ireland be obtained by the concurrent endowment of other religions, or could it only be secured by the disendowment of the Established Church? On both these points Lord John communicated with Lord Grey,

and on both of them Lord Grey and he frankly stated their own views. Encouraged in this way to proceed, Lord John showed to Lord Grey the arrangements which he proposed to make for the disposition of offices, and Lord Grey at once objected to a scheme which involved Lord Palmerston's return to the Foreign Office. The rest of the story will best be told by the correspondence.

C[arlton] T[errace]: December 19, 1845.

My dear John Russell,—I have just received your note. . . . Of course I need not say that the new objection which . . . has been urged against my returning to the Foreign Office renders it still more impossible than it was before for me to take any other office, and by so doing to acquiesce in objections which I believe to be utterly unfounded. But I see no reason why my not being in your Cabinet should prevent you from forming your Government, and I still repeat to you to-day the opinion which I expressed to you yesterday that you ought to undertake the commission which the Queen has proposed to you.—Yours sincerely,

PALMERSTON.

Lord John Russell.

Belgrave Square: Friday night, December 19, 1845.

My dear Lord John,—As I understand that partly in consequence of what passed between us to-day you have decided upon giving up the commission to form a Government entrusted to you by her Majesty, I think it right to state to you in writing the reasons I have already verbally communicated to you which compelled me very reluctantly to decline taking a part in the Administration as you had intended to construct it.

. . . It was not without a good deal of difficulty, arising from my opinions upon great public questions, that I could agree to belong to the proposed Government; but having stated to you that difficulty, and having clearly explained to you my views upon the questions alluded to, I was ready, as I said, to take office if such should still be your wish, provided that in filling up the various situations at your disposal you would adopt the principle laid down in my letter of the 16th, and 'allow no deference for the personal objects of others to interfere with your making the arrangement best calculated to secure for your Government the largest possible measure of public confidence and support.' . . . Having distinctly stated to you that such were my views before you undertook the formation of a Government, I naturally to-day, when you proposed to me to accept the office you designed

for me, requested to be informed what were the other appointments you intended recommending to her Majesty. When informed of these I at once observed that there was one of them to which you must be aware that a strong objection was very generally entertained; you admitted such to be the case, and that you knew I alluded to the appointment of Lord Palmerston to the office of Secretary of State for the Foreign Department. . . . It is always painful to state the grounds of such objections as these, but in my own justification I am compelled to do so. For Lord Palmerston I have much regard, and I have always been on the most amicable terms with him. . . . It was not therefore that I had on my own account any personal objection to Lord Palmerston, of whose abilities also I have a very high opinion. But I could not be blind to the notorious fact that, justly or unjustly, both friends and opponents regarded with considerable apprehension the prospect of his return to the Foreign Office, and the existence of such a feeling was, in my mind, no slight objection to the appointment. But further, when he formerly held this office, events occurred which are by no means yet forgotten, which have created feelings of apparent alienation between him and some of the chief statesmen and diplomatists of foreign countries, more especially of France. Hence there is now undeniably on their part a predisposition to view with jealousy whatever may be done by him; and conduct which may be perfectly proper in itself might when adopted by him give offence which it would not do coming from another person.

Considering, then, how often circumstances arise in which misunderstandings between nations are very easily created, and that in such cases it frequently depends very much upon the personally friendly or unfriendly feelings of those by whom such difficulties have to be arranged whether the discussions to which they give rise end well or ill, I could not but believe that the appointment to which I objected might very materially increase the danger of the country being involved in all the calamities of war, and so believing I could not in conscience agree to it. I did, therefore. strongly press upon you the importance of appointing Lord Palmerston to some other office rather than that which was proposed for him, and suggested the one you had intended for myself, namely, the Colonial Department, which I should have been most happy to give up to him. You told me that you had already proposed to him this arrangement, and that he had positively declined it, because, as I understood you, it would imply, in his opinion, some reflection upon him. I confess I do not think it would have done so. The office of Secretary for the Colonies is one of equal rank and importance with that which he

before held ; and, admitting it to be one less agreeable to him, I think the sacrifice was one he might fairly be asked to make for the benefit of the public and of the Administration in which he was about to take part. . . .—Believe me, yours very truly,

GREY.

Lord John replied—

Chesham Place : December 21, 1845.

My dear Howick,—I am very sorry for what has occurred.

I am more particularly sorry that you did not mention to me on Monday your insuperable objection to Palmerston's holding the seals of the Foreign Department. In that case, I should not have asked you to come to my house again. For the general words you used never conveyed to my mind the impression that you objected to Lord Palmerston at the Foreign Office. I gave way to no personal preference in proposing that office to him. I think he is the person in the United Kingdom best fitted for that department. No doubt impressions, the result of unjust aspersions, deserve some consideration, but not to the extent of excluding a person against his will from the office for which he is fitted, and which alone he is willing to accept.

I trust we shall always continue private friends, whatever may happen in political affairs.—I remain, yours truly,

J. RUSSELL.

Lord John's first feeling was one of relief. He wrote to his wife on the 20th—

I write to you with a great sense of relief on public affairs. Lord Grey's objection to sitting in a Cabinet in which Palmerston was to have the Foreign Office was invincible. I could not make a Cabinet without Lord Grey, and I have, therefore, been to Windsor this morning to resign my hard task. The Queen, as usual, was very gracious, and was angry with Lord Grey for his determination ; she was, in short, convinced that I was right in wishing to retain Palmerston at the Foreign Office. I have left a paper with her in which I state that we were prepared to advise free trade in corn without gradation and without delay ; but that I would support Sir Robert Peel in any measure which he should think more practicable.

On the same day he wrote to his father-in-law—

Dear Lord Minto,—I hope to be at Minto on Tuesday next, having happily failed in forming a Ministry.

I think it was right to try ; and I am not to blame for the failure.

I shall support Palmerston, who is so unjustly accused of wishing for war, and who has always behaved so gallantly and so well.—Ever yours,

J. RUSSELL.

But, though Lord John felt relief at his escape, he resented bitterly Lord Grey's conduct. He wrote to Lady John on the 21st—

Howick is so much to blame that I am resolved never to act with him in public again. Only think of his advising us to accept office on Tuesday and Thursday, and making his objection on Friday. But the whole affair will, I fear, prove ridiculous.

Strongly, however, as he felt, he had the generosity to suppress all reference to Lord Grey in the official account which he gave the Queen of his failure.

Chesham Place: December 20, 1845.

Lord John Russell presents his humble duty to your Majesty, and has the honour to state that he has found it impossible to form an Administration.

Lord John Russell was aware, from the first moment when your Majesty was pleased to propose to him this commission, that there were very great difficulties in the way, which it required the most cordial co-operation on the part of his friends, and the firm support of a large portion of those who followed Sir Robert Peel, to surmount.

Lord John Russell has had solely in view the settlement of the question of the Corn Laws by which the country is so much agitated. Those who have served your Majesty and your royal predecessor in Cabinet offices during the Administrations of Lord Grey and Lord Melbourne, who were now in political connection with Lord John Russell, were consulted by him. They agreed on the principles by which they would be guided in framing a measure for the repeal of the Corn Laws. Thus one great difficulty was surmounted. But, as the party which acts with Lord John Russell is in a minority in both Houses of Parliament, it was necessary to ascertain how far they were likely to obtain the support of Sir Robert Peel.

Your Majesty is acquainted with all that has passed on this subject. Lord John Russell is quite ready to admit that Sir Robert Peel has been willing from the commencement to the end to diminish the difficulties in the course of a new Government prepared to attempt the settlement of the Corn Laws. But

Sir Robert Peel could not, of course, rely on the support of his political friends should the proposed measure be in their eyes dangerous or otherwise.

In this uncertainty of obtaining a majority in the House of Commons it was absolutely necessary that all those who were prominent in the political party to which Lord J. Russell is attached should give their zealous aid, and act in concert in the new Administration. Lord John Russell has in one instance been unable to obtain this concert, and he must now consider that task as hopeless which has been from the beginning hazardous.

Lord John Russell is deeply sensible of the embarrassment caused by the present state of public affairs. He will be ready, therefore, to do all in his power as a member of Parliament to promote the settlement of that question which in present circumstances is the source of so much danger, especially to the welfare and the peace of Ireland.

Lord John Russell would have formed his Ministry on the basis of a complete free trade in corn, to be established at once without gradation or delay: he would have accompanied that proposal with measures of relief to a considerable extent of the occupiers of land from the burdens to which they are subjected; but he will be little disposed to insist as a member of Parliament on what may seem to your Majesty's advisers an impracticable course. The country requires above all things a peaceable settlement of a question which, if not so settled, may in an adverse state of affairs cause a fearful convulsion.

But Lord John's generosity did not stop at this point. The gravamen of his charge against Lord Grey was that Lord Grey had waited till the Friday, or till after the formation of a Whig Government had been decided on, to raise an objection which ought to have been stated on the previous Monday, before Lord John had resolved on making the attempt. But Lord Grey's brother-in-law, Mr. Wood, pointed out to Lord John that, if this point were stated, Lord Grey must necessarily make the best defence in his power; and an altercation must ensue which, whatever else came of it, could neither lead to peace nor to the welfare of the party. Lord John, sore as he was at the treatment which he had experienced, gave way, and deliberately omitted from his public explanation in Parliament what he himself considered the strongest feature in his whole case. What Mr.

Wood thought of this generosity will be seen from the following letter :—

13 Wilton Street: Friday morning [January 22, 1846].

My dear Lord John,—I must, after a night's consideration, deliberately thank you most sincerely for the manner in which you made your explanation last night. It was above any praise I can give it; but what I most feel is the kind and considerate tone towards Howick. He feels it too very sincerely, and expressed himself very strongly when we got home.

It is, however, impossible fairly to appreciate your conduct without knowing what you felt as to abstaining from alluding to the late period of the objection. I think it is due to you that Howick should know that; and I hope, therefore, you will not think that I have improperly violated your confidence in having sent to him this morning the copy of one short sentence of your letter to me, to the effect that not alluding to the late period of the objection was taking blame upon yourself which you felt that you did not deserve.

This risk you have taken upon yourself, and it is not the less kind because I think it the wisest and best course as well as the most considerate.

It is miserably wrong as well as a public misfortune that a cloud should have intervened between two men with such great and high qualities; holding the same principles, and aiming at the same great objects; but I will not despair of their acting so far together as essentially to further the great public ends which both have in view.

Believe me, yours very sincerely,

CHARLES WOOD.

CHAPTER XVI.

PRIME MINISTER.

THERE is very little use in discussing the propriety of Lord John's decision in December 1845, in inquiring whether he might have reconciled the conflicting claims of Lord Palmerston and Lord Grey, or whether he might have succeeded in maintaining his position and carrying free trade in corn without the assistance of one or both of these statesmen. His refusal to make the attempt compelled the Queen to recall Sir Robert Peel to her counsels. Sir Robert succeeded in resuscitating his old Ministry, and in introducing the great measure of Free Trade, which some men still regard as the chief glory, and others as the chief reproach, of his career.

The protracted discussions, however, which took place on the Minister's proposals have much closer reference to the lives of Sir Robert Peel and Mr. Disraeli than to the career of Lord John Russell. Lord John, on his part, loyally redeemed the pledge which he had given the Queen to support the proposal of the Ministry, and his speeches on the subject are devoid of any particular interest. They were marked, however, by his usual ability. Writing to Lady John on February 10, Mr. Rutherford said—

> You should be very proud of your lord to-day. He has made an admirable speech—to my mind one of the best I ever heard. The Speaker told me last night that he never heard anything more statesmanlike.

And many other letters containing similar praise cheered Lady John during her forced absence in Edinburgh.

Free Trade constituted only one of the difficulties which beset Sir Robert Peel. The state of Ireland, and the relations of this country with the United States, increased the

anxiety of the Minister. American statesmen seemed bent on war; and Mr. Everett, the American Minister in London, took the unusual course of appealing from the Government to the Opposition. Lord John sent him the following answer:—

Confidential] Chesham Place: February 3, 1846.

My dear Mr. Everett,—I am indebted to you for the clear and able view which you have communicated to me of the controversy now pending between your country and mine. The question is still in the hands of our respective Governments, and I understood the other day from Sir R. Peel that a new proposition for arbitration had been made, to which no answer had yet been received.

In this state of affairs I am unwilling to discuss with you the extent of concession which may be made by each party. You may be assured that I should not attempt to embarrass our Ministers by urging them to more rigid consistency than they are disposed themselves to maintain.

You will have seen before this time what I have said at Glasgow and in Parliament: you will, I trust, find that on both occasions I evinced a spirit of friendliness and good-will towards the United States.

I am indeed at a loss to account for the rage of hostility against England, and aggression against all the world, which seems on a sudden to have seized so many of your senators or representatives. Even Mr. Adams seems to imagine that nothing is so glorious as to rush into unprovoked and unnecessary war. Are the United States so cabined and confined in their territory as to make it essential to their existence to overrun some twelve degrees of latitude to find space for their people? or what is the insult which, it seems, can only be washed out in the blood of two brother nations, each strong enough to hurt the other, but neither likely to profit by any termination of hostilities it is possible to imagine? Our own absolute rights we must defend; our disputable rights we are ready to submit to arbitration or regulate by fair compromise; and we seek nothing from the United States which it is not consistent both with her honour and her interests to grant.

Our Ministers will not have my support unless they can show that they have tried every avenue to honourable arrangement. But against wanton aggression they will have not only my support, but that of the whole nation.

I conclude with a wish that in the councils of both countries peaceful spirits may prevail.—I remain, yours very faithfully,

J. Russell.

Lord Aberdeen had the satisfaction of bringing this dispute to a peaceful termination before he resigned office. Sir Robert Peel was not similarly successful in dealing with the Irish question. The disturbed state of some parts of Ireland, and the fear that disturbance would be aggravated by distress, impelled him to introduce a fresh Coercion Bill. Lord John was no friend to such a policy, and in assenting to the first reading of the measure declared that he should have objections to offer to it which would go to the foundations of some of its principal provisions.[1] These objections were not diminished by the delay which, through the obstructive tactics of the Protectionists, occurred in passing the Bill. Even Whigs like Lord Bessborough and Lord Clanricarde, personally interested in Ireland, who had supported the measure in the Lords, changed their minds in consequence, and declared that it was both doing harm and would do harm.[2] Under these circumstances Lord John felt that his position was altered; and, instead of carrying out his original intention of amending the Bill from its foundations, decided on opposing it altogether. The Protectionists, who would have done anything to defeat their old leader, rallied in Lord John's support. By a strange coincidence, on the night on which the Corn Bill passed the Lords the Coercion Bill was defeated in the Commons. Immediately afterwards, on the 27th of June, Sir Robert Peel resigned office, and on the 28th of June the Queen sent for Lord John.

But the circumstances under which Lord John made his second journey to Osborne were widely different from those which had surrounded him in the previous December. His wife was no longer detained by illness at Edinburgh. Under Dr. Simpson's care she had sufficiently recovered to be moved to London, and she was now residing with her own child and her step-children at 'a delightful villa' which Lord John had taken at Wimbledon. Office, therefore, did not involve so great a rupture of domestic ties as it had seemed to necessitate six months before. This circumstance deprived the duty which the Queen was committing to him of the misery with which he had then associated it. The events

[1] *Hansard*, lxxxv. 548. [2] *Greville*, 2nd series, ii. 382.

of the session, moreover, had naturally lessened some of the difficulties which had stood in the way at the previous Christmas. Though Lord John was still in a minority he could rely on a majority on almost every occasion; for if Protectionists and Peelites were nominally opposed to the Whigs, they were much more hostile to one another. It was certain that Lord George Bentinck at least would support any Minister who would keep Sir Robert Peel out of office.

But if the prospects of a Whig Ministry were in this way improved, the difficulty was still great. The embarrassments which every statesman charged with the formation of a Government has to encounter are probably only known to the few men who have filled such a situation, or to the few others who have had access to their private correspondence. Ordinary persons can hardly understand the rapacity of politicians on such occasions. Second-rate peers send in their applications for offices in the Ministry, for offices in the Household, for ribands for themselves, and for places for their children; and though peers are far the most numerous offenders on these occasions, or were at any rate the most numerous offenders in 1845 and 1846, the commoners who apply for peerages display an equally discreditable hunger. It is hardly worth while, however, to linger over the unseemly greed of men who are already forgotten, on the claims of Lord Taper for the Bath, or the Marquis of Tadpole for the Buckhounds.

Four courses were open to Lord John—(1) to form a Ministry from his own friends; (2) to seek an alliance with Mr. Cobden, (3) with Sir Robert Peel's followers, (4) with the Protectionists. Many men of influence were in favour of the latter alternative,[1] while others thought rightly that a coalition

[1] But Lord John himself, three months before, had given excellent reasons against it.

April 11, 1846.

My dear Duncannon,— . . . I should not like to embark in a Government which rested on the support of any extreme party. This has been the case too much both with our Ministry of '35 and Peel's of '41. It were much to be desired that men of sound and temperate liberality would aid in the formation of any Government that may succeed at present. But their union must be formed on the

of men who enjoyed no community of opinion had nothing to recommend it. This alternative being rejected, Lord John decided on applying to some of the younger and abler members of Sir Robert Peel's Cabinet—Lord Dalhousie, Lord Lincoln, and Mr. Sidney Herbert—and he wrote the following letter (*mutatis mutandis*) to each of these three men :—

Confidential] Chesham Place: July 1, 1846.

My Lord,—Her Majesty having been pleased to confide to me the task of forming an Administration, I think it my duty both to her Majesty and the country to endeavour to unite in her Majesty's Cabinet Council not only those who have acted in political connection with me, and have taken a prominent part in public business, but also some of those who, belonging to a different party, have brought forward measures of commercial freedom and have received our zealous support.

I have received the Queen's permission to propose to you to join the new Cabinet, and I have received a similar permission with respect to Lord Lincoln and Mr. Sidney Herbert.

I shall be ready at any time to enter into the fullest explanation with you respecting the policy of the future Government; but, without knowing your views on the preliminary question, such an explanation would be premature.—I have, &c.,

J. RUSSELL.

The Earl of Dalhousie.

All three men declined the offer, and Lord John, therefore, was driven to consider the remaining alternative, whether he should form a Government from his own friends or should claim Mr. Cobden's assistance. On this point there was the gravest difference of opinion among the old

solid ground of agreement in political questions now above the horizon. Your liberal Protectionists must seriously consider whether they can bear to see franchises, equal to those of Englishmen, bestowed on Irishmen; offices given to Catholics as well as to Protestants; the Irish landlords compelled to act fairly by their tenants; the national revenue maintained by adequate taxes; crime put down by vigilance and exertion rather than by shutting up honest people all night; and, when measures of severity are necessary, taking care to give the soothing as well as the drastic medicine. If such measures are beyond the ken of the Protection party, and they seek only for revenge, we should do ill to patch up a Ministry which the first Cabinet meeting might dissolve.—Yours truly,

J. R.

Whigs. Mr. Horsman, writing not merely for himself, but representing, as he said, 'the opinions of much wiser and safer heads,' strongly urged Mr. Cobden's claims.

> Mr. Cobden represents great interests, who feel that when Sir J. Graham pronounced him the most remarkable man who had entered Parliament for thirty years he signed his passport to the Cabinet; and it would be a source of regret to many who care nothing personally for Mr. Cobden, but are sincerely attached by their principles to you, if you were to enter on power without the full confidence and support of the commercial interests which it is yet in your power to command.

Lord Lansdowne, on the contrary, writing on the 2nd of July, declared that he had no personal objection to serving with Mr. Cobden, but that 'the risk of inviting him would be greater than the gain;' while, according to Lord Beauvale,[1] 'one of the two conditions upon which their (the Protectionists') offer of support is made to depend is the not placing Cobden in any prominent office.'

There was, moreover, one other difficulty in the way of admitting Mr. Cobden to the Cabinet. Absorbed in popular agitation, he had neglected his own affairs, and the triumph of his public principles was accomplished at the moment of his private ruin. Under these circumstances his friends and admirers came forward with 'a national testimonial of a pecuniary kind.' His biographer admits that 'there would have been undoubtedly some difficulty in giving high office in the State to a politician' thus situated; but he does not seem to be aware that Lord John contemplated another arrangement, by which he hoped to secure Mr. Cobden's services: so at least may be gathered from the following letter from Lord Beauvale, to whom Lord John seems to have confided his intentions:—

Saturday night [? July 4].

My dear Lord John,—I had mentioned your Cobden plans to nobody but Palmerston, who highly applauded them; and I further informed him that Charles Murray's health is in such a state that he will probably be unable to occupy the post of Egypt. Now Cobden's

[1] Lord Beauvale was Lord Melbourne's younger brother.

former pamphlets and his leaning towards Mehemet Ali eminently point him out for that most important post, so that Palmerston went away quite comfortable about it.[1]

There are perhaps no means of knowing whether this suggestion was communicated to Mr. Cobden himself at the interview which Lord John had with him on the 2nd of July in Chesham Place; but at that interview Lord John expressed a hope that, on Mr. Cobden's return from abroad, where he was going for the sake of his health, he would join a Liberal Administration.

The letter which Lord John subsequently wrote to Mr. Cobden has already been published by Mr. Morley, but it may be interesting to give here the commencement of Mr. Cobden's answer:—

Private] Llangollen, North Wales: July 4, 1846.

My dear Lord John,—Your letter reached me just as I was starting from Manchester for Montgomeryshire, and I take the first opportunity of replying. I had so unreservedly stated to your intimate friends, and I believe to yourself, in the course of a short communication which we had together in Chesham Place, that I had not the most distant desire or intention to take office under any circumstances that I assure you I should not have felt in the slightest degree overlooked if you had not referred to the subject again. I beg, however, to express my high sense of your kindness in writing to me. . . . Believe me, faithfully yours,

RICHARD COBDEN.

One other personal question Lord John had to settle. It has been already seen that, in the previous December, he had made up his mind never to act with Lord Grey again; but his temper was too generous, and his disposition too forgiving, to allow him to brood for long over Lord Grey's conduct.

[1] It is worth while adding that Mr. Charles Villiers, who was, at the same time, offered and refused Cabinet office, was also offered employment abroad. Lord Palmerston was willing to provide for him at Rio, where it was thought that his knowledge of Free Trade might be useful. Lord John contemplated sending him as Governor to Bombay; but the difficulty of carrying the appointment with 'the Chairs' ultimately led to its abandonment. A year afterwards Lord John offered Mr. Villiers the Governorship of Madras; but the offer was declined.

Eaton Place: Sunday morning [? June 28, 1846].

My dear Lord John,—Howick told me yesterday afternoon the purport of your communication to him as to himself. . . . I understand from him that you contemplate the possibility of his being included *hereafter*. But, if your Government is to be on a broad basis in order to command support, much depends on its first formation; and is there not some fear that in the interval much may occur which may render a *future* junction impossible?

The reasons for including him seem to me to be principally three:—

1. The confidence which the League and Free Trade party have in him . . . .

2. I do not think that anybody else is so competent to take the Colonial Office . . . .

3. His assistance in the House of Lords seems to me to be all but indispensable.

If he is not in the Government he is sure to differ from it before long, and he will express that difference of opinion, however much he may give a general and cordial support.

Now look at the probable opponents in the Lords—

1. Duke of Wellington, with all his authority and weight.

2. Ellenboro' to speak the Duke's opinion, and a very able speaker.

3. Stanley leading the opinion of the majority of the House.

4. Brougham, ready for any mischief.

5. Grey occasionally attacking.

6. If Graham is made a Peer—a bitter opponent, excellent tactician, &c. . . .

Whom have you to oppose to these men? . . . Grey would be a heavy weight taken out of the opposite scale and added to your own. . . . I may add that, with a heavy department on his hands, he will have enough to occupy him, and that, with occasional communication on your part, which will be indispensable with him in the House of Lords, and a little forbearance from his colleagues, I have confident hopes that all might go smooth.—Yours truly,

CHARLES WOOD.

Three days later Mr. Wood wrote again that he had seen Lord Grey and told him that no offer could be made to him unless it were certain to be accepted; that Lord Grey

was quite prepared to waive any objection on the score of Palmerston . . . and that he felt the necessity of making the machine work

easily if he came in. He felt the separation from all his friends very much if he was not included. Mr. Wood added: 'Nothing has occurred to commit you, but, unless a sudden turn take place, I think you may calculate on his not refusing.'

Thus the difficulties which had interfered with the formation of a Ministry in December had disappeared in July; and Lord John Russell, forgetting his resentment against his former colleague, at once decided on including him in the new Administration.

Facilitated in this way, the task of forming a Ministry was not difficult. Lord John received the Queen's commands to form an Administration at Osborne on Tuesday, June 30. The following day he returned to London, stopped at Wimbledon on his way, and after a good romp with the children, with whom he played at ball, drove on with Lady John to Chesham Place. The succeeding five days sufficed for completing every arrangement; and on Monday, July 6, the new Ministers kissed hands at Osborne.

Lord John's acceptance of office necessitated his re-election. He thus asked the support of the London electors:—

Gentlemen,—Her Majesty having been pleased to confer upon me the office of First Lord of the Treasury, my seat in Parliament is again at your disposal.

When you did me the honour to ask me to represent you, I consented to become a candidate, not merely or chiefly because the distinction of representing the City of London was a great object of ambition, but because I wished to obtain for the principles of commercial freedom the sanction of your approbation.

Although I was elected by a very small majority, and the electors of 1841 were adverse to my hopes and favourable to the doctrines of Protection, every year that has since elapsed has witnessed some relaxation of restrictions and some advance towards the establishment of the principles for which I contended.

Finally, we have this year seen Sir Robert Peel propose and carry a measure for the total repeal of the duties on foreign corn.

You may be assured that I shall not desert in office the principles to which I adhered when they were less favourably received. I cannot indeed, claim the merit either of having carried measures of Free Trade as a Minister, or of having so prepared the public mind by any

exertions of mine as to convert what would have been an impracticable attempt into a certain victory. To others belong those distinctions. But I have endeavoured to do my part in this great work according to my means and convictions, first, by proposing a temperate relaxation of the Corn Laws, and afterwards, when that measure had been repeatedly rejected, by declaring in favour of total repeal, and using any influence I could exert to prevent a renewal of the struggle for an object not worth the cost of conflict.

This great battle is, I trust, for the present nearly ended. It is most desirable that it should not be renewed. The Government of this country ought to behold with an impartial eye the various portions of the community engaged in agriculture, in manufactures, and in commerce. The feeling that any of them is treated with injustice provokes ill-will, disturbs legislation, and diverts attention from many useful and necessary reforms. Great social improvements are required: public education is manifestly imperfect; the treatment of criminals is a problem yet undecided; the sanitary condition of our towns and villages has been grossly neglected. Our recent discussions have laid bare the misery, the discontent, and outrages of Ireland; they are too clearly authenticated to be denied, too extensive to be treated by any but the most comprehensive measures.

Should you again elect me as your member, it will be my duty to consider all these important matters in conjunction with those whom her Majesty shall be pleased to call to her Councils. . . .—I have, &c.,

J. RUSSELL.

The issue was not long doubtful. The new writ for London was moved on the 3rd, and Lord John took his seat and the oaths on July 13. Three days later he made what Mr. Greville called 'a very clever and judicious speech declaratory of his principles and intentions.'

The work of the session, already greatly delayed by the protracted discussion on Sir Robert Peel's measure, was naturally further interrupted by the fall of one Ministry and the formation of another. Yet, in the few weeks which elapsed before Parliament was prorogued, Lord John found time to deal with one subject of the highest importance. Sugar had been the ground on which the battle of Free Trade had been fought in 1841. Sugar had been the proximate cause of the defeat of the Melbourne Administration; and, notwithstanding the changes which had since been

introduced by Sir Robert Peel, foreign slave-grown sugar still paid a duty of 63*s.* a hundredweight against the 14*s.* paid on colonial sugar. This huge differential duty was bad for the consumer, since it raised the price of sugar, and bad for the revenue, since it decreased the consumption, and so diminished the yield. The adoption of Free Trade made its retention more indefensible, and the necessities of the Exchequer formed an additional reason for immediate action. The new Ministers accordingly decided on at once reducing the duties on slave-grown sugar, and on ultimately equalising them with those on colonial produce. The policy which Lord John thus adopted was far more drastic than that which he had proposed five years before. Met with the same tactics which had led to the defeat of Lord Melbourne's Ministry, it was carried by a far larger majority than that by which the Whigs had then been defeated; and it affords the only instance in history of a measure, directly leading to the fall of a Minister, being carried, in a more comprehensive form than that in which it was originally proposed, by the same Minister on his restoration to power.

It would have been a happy thing for the new Ministry if it had been able after this successful achievement to bring the labours of the session to a conclusion. Unfortunately there were two other matters with which it was forced to deal—the one a measure of precaution against Irish disturbance, the other a measure of relief for Irish suffering.

Sir Robert Peel's Ministry had suffered its final defeat on a Coercion Bill; and Lord John years afterwards put the whole case against this Bill in a couple of sentences:—

> I objected to the Bill on Irish grounds. I then thought, and I still think, that it is wrong to arrest men and put them in prison on the ground that they *may* be murderers and housebreakers. They may be, on the other hand, honest labourers going home from their work.[1]

Lord Bessborough, however, the new Viceroy, doubted the possibility of governing Ireland without coercion. His advisers at Dublin Castle unanimously agreed with him;

[1] *Recollections and Suggestions*, p. 241.

and Lord John reluctantly consented,[1] in consequence, to the introduction of an Arms Bill. There was undoubtedly some justification for this course. As Lord John said himself—

> It was desirable to obtain the renewal of the Arms Bill until the next spring in order that her Majesty's Government might consider the whole of its provisions, to see . . . whether the system should be altogether abandoned, or whether any other provision should be introduced in its place.

But the Liberal party not unnaturally thought otherwise. After having been required to vote against a measure of coercion when proposed by its opponents, it disliked adopting a measure of repression from the hands of its own leaders; and its objections were so strong that the Cabinet resolved on abandoning the Bill. On the evening on which Lord John disclosed this decision to the House he made a much more important announcement:—

> I am sorry to be obliged to state that . . . the prospect of the potato this year is even more distressing than last year—that the disease has appeared earlier, and its ravages are far more extensive.

Under these circumstances, the Government thought it necessary to supplement and revise the measures which its predecessors had taken for the relief of the Irish people. Sir Robert Peel had largely relied on employing the people on public works, the cost of which was to be divided eventually between the locality and the State. Lord John, on the contrary, determined, and Parliament sanctioned his policy, that the works in future to be undertaken should be paid for by loans advanced from the Exchequer to the district at a low rate of interest, but eventually repaid by the locality. The particular public work required was to be selected by the barony or county sessions in which it was initiated, but the work was to be controlled by the officers of the Government.

This measure, and other Bills of a kindred nature, were rapidly disposed of. Parliament was prorogued by commission on the 28th of August, and Lord John was able to avail himself of such a holiday as falls to the lot of Prime Ministers. He

[1] Greville, 2nd series, ii. 409.

was in need of repose. For, with that singular fatality which frequently accompanied him in his career, domestic sorrow had supervened on political anxiety; and on the 16th of July, the very night on which he had explained and defended his position in the House, his brother William had died at Genoa.

Lord John was not wholly unprepared for the event. Symptoms of the coming end had been visible for some months; and Lady Mary Abercromby, wife of the British Minister at Turin, sent her sister, Lord John's wife, constant reports of Lord William's illness. For many years Lord John had seen comparatively little of his brother. His diplomatic career had kept him necessarily abroad, and, though diplomacy and he had parted company in 1841, Lord William had continued to reside almost wholly on the Continent. Lord John still retained the warm affection for his brother which he had felt for him when they had been boys together at Sunbury, at Westminster, and at Woodnesboro'. The press of business, however, hardly allowed him leisure to indulge his grief. He could not be spared for a moment from the House of Commons. He gladly, therefore, welcomed his release from Westminster, and joined his family at Wimbledon. There he remained till the end of October, paying visits to the Queen at Osborne and Windsor, to Lord Clarendon at The Grove, and to his brother at Woburn. Mr. Greville, who had been with him at The Grove, and who joined the party at Woburn the day on which Lord John left, wrote—

> Lord John went away the day I came. He is in high spirits, on good terms with the Queen, and well satisfied with the political aspect of his affairs. He seems very honourably and wisely disposed, meaning well and conscientiously, with no rash designs and extravagant projects; but, on the contrary, desirous of doing nothing but what public opinion and public necessity really demand. . . . He seems to be wonderfully free from any spirit of jobbing and favouritism in his appointments of all sorts, and, without losing sight of party and political ties and obligations, to be resolved to do what is right and just and good for the public service.

It may be well to compare Mr. Greville's short entry

with a more elaborate portrait drawn at the same time by one of Lord John's own colleagues. Lord Campbell wrote —

He is a very amiable as well as a very great man. His benevolent and intellectual smile indicates the high qualities of which he is possessed. Not only is he most exemplary in all the relations of domestic life, but he is warm and steady in his friendships, and he not only breaks no promise, but disappoints no reasonable expectation of favour. His talents are of a high, although I cannot say of the highest, order. In authorship he did not gain much distinction. . . . Nor can I celebrate him as a first-rate orator. His information is copious, his reasoning is sound, and his sentiments are noble, but he is wanting in rapidity of thought and of utterance. . . . Yet he is listened to in the House of Commons with uniform respect, and he often elicits the loud cheers of his party. They feel that there is no one nearly so well qualified to be their leader. . . . He has always risen with the occasion, and now very worthily fills the office of Prime Minister. His deportment to the Queen is most respectful, but he always remembers that as *she* can do no wrong, *he* is responsible for all the measures of her government. He is enough at Court to show that he enjoys the constitutional confidence of the sovereign without being domiciled there as a *favourite*. He is indefatigable in business, and without any vexatious interference is aware of what is going on in every department. Although acting, as he ought, upon his own judgment with respect to the great measures of his Administration, he is always ready to listen to his colleagues, and to give due weight to their suggestions. As far as *they* are concerned, his manners, instead of being repulsive, are rather winning. Upon the whole, I am highly contented to serve under such a chief.

It may complete the picture if, to these accounts of friend and colleague, Lady John's remembrance of her husband's life is added. The acceptance of office, she wrote—

was the beginning of many new cares and anxieties, and an amount of mental toil and strain to which his naturally feeble frame might have been deemed unequal. But, although he had no order or method in the arrangement of his papers, he knew how to husband his time. He was very punctual; he knew, as he has told me, what he might trust to others to do and what he must do himself. . . . This, he thought, accounted for the possibility he found of fulfilling his mighty daily task without the neglect of air and exercise, and without giving up the evening leisure with his children and me which

he valued so much. . . . As far as I recollect he never but once worked after dinner. . . . He always came up to the drawing-room with us, was able to cast off public cares, and chat and laugh, and read and be read to, or join in little games, such as capping verses, of which he was very fond. . . . He liked office and always plainly said so, and saw no reason to be ashamed of the manly pride he felt in [it]. . . . When some perplexing matter arose which called for decision, and on which the balance of right and wrong seemed now to incline one way now the other, he would give it due and anxious deliberation, but having made up his mind he did not discompose it by looking back and doubting and beginning the process over again.

Lord John stayed in London, occupied with the affairs of his office, during the greater part of November; though in the course of the month he paid a short visit to his half-brother, Lord Wriothesley, at Chenies, and a more formal one—to meet the Queen and Prince Albert—at the Duke of Norfolk's, at Arundel. It was after this visit that the Duke of Bedford, who was also at Arundel, told Mr. Greville that 'the Queen and Prince Albert have got on vastly good terms with Lord John.' At Chenies Lord John had the opportunity of looking at Chorley Wood—a place which had been recommended to him, and of which he immediately afterwards took a lease. He entered his new home on December 5; celebrated his boy's fourth birthday five days afterwards; and wound up the old year with a 'grand ball for the children and servants.' Lady John wrote in her diary—

All very merry. John danced a great deal, and I not a little. Darling Johnny danced the first country dance, holding his papa's hand and mine.

This ball practically concluded Lord John's first stay at Chorley Wood. Two days afterwards he brought wife and children up to London; and there, on January 12, his eldest step-daughter, Adelaide, was married to Mr. Maurice Drummond, a younger son of Mr. Charles Drummond.

Lord John at this time was exceptionally busy. Parliament was summoned for January 19; and both the state of foreign politics and the condition of Ireland were certain to

make the session arduous and important. The whole work of the Treasury, moreover, was at this precise conjuncture thrown on the First Lord's shoulders, in consequence of the enforced absence of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Wood, who was detained in Yorkshire by his father's last illness. While he was thus harassed by public work, private trouble fell on the Chesham Place household. Lord John himself was momentarily prostrated by the blow; and his brother, writing to him from Woburn, urged him not to let 'his grief get the better of his philosophy.' To add to his trouble, Lady John fell dangerously ill; and Lord John, for some weeks, was in great anxiety on her account. Depressed in spirits and overwhelmed with work, he was hardly physically equal for the struggles before him.

Ireland was the subject which had been mainly occupying, and was still engrossing, Lord John's attention. The total failure of the potato crop had disarranged all the plans of the Government. Ministers had hoped that, by throwing on the presenting barony the whole eventual cost of the public works, they would have reduced the applications for relief. But in the presence of famine these natural anticipations were unfulfilled. The numbers employed on the works rose from 180,000 in October, to 600,000 in January. The Government had no adequate means either of organising or controlling so vast an amount of labour. Huddled on the highways, the men blocked and even destroyed the roads which they were supposed to be repairing.

Throughout the autumn, the Irish Government, appalled by the distress with which it was surrounded, desired to increase the means of employing the people. Lord Bessborough especially was anxious that the law should be strained, and that the people should be employed on works not merely of a public character, but intended to improve private property, and by improving it to indirectly promote the general interests. Mr. Wood, on the contrary, with the caution of a financier and the good sense of an economist, stoutly resisted the application of public money to the improvement of private estates; and strenuously argued that it was impossible

to do so unfortunate a thing in every sense as to relax in any point which relieved any portion of the Irish community from the duties which they are respectively called upon to perform.

Lord John had to take a middle line between his colleagues, and it was ultimately decided by the Cabinet to construe the phrase 'public' in a liberal sense, including in public work the arterial drainage of lands, but to insist that all other improvements of private property should be made on the security of the owners and not of the ratepayers. There were, indeed, two things which the Government refused to do. It was urged by many of its friends to summon Parliament in the autumn, and to suspend the remaining duties on corn. It was thought by many of the Irish that it should have sent emissaries in every direction to buy corn, which it should have retailed at low prices to the people. The first course Lord John rejected with some hesitation. But the duties which still remained on corn were comparatively trifling; and, as the Irish Government urged, the Irish members of the Legislature, or those of them who were doing their duty, could render much more effectual help in the crisis by remaining at home than by repairing to Westminster The other proposal Lord John was much too clear-sighted to adopt. As he himself said in the debate on the Address at the opening of the session of 1847—

To try it by the most severe test, and at the same time the fairest which can be applied, I think it would lead to a greater number of deaths by famine than the course which we thought it our duty to pursue. Sir, the opinion of the honourable gentleman was that the Government ought to have ransacked the world for food . . . and should have attempted to feed the people of Ireland with the produce they procured. Now, I think, in the first place it is evident that no sooner had that intention been declared . . . there would have been an end at once of all private enterprise, an end at once of all application of the capital of this great country, of the means and of the skill which our merchants are so well known to possess, and that everything would have been abandoned to the care of the Government which had been so presumptuous as to undertake such a task . . . But suppose, by means of our vessels, a supply had been brought into Ireland, then the next thing to have been undertaken would have been what in fact would have amounted to the whole retail

trade of the country . . . . We have heard enough of the enormous staff which has been required for the public works; but what a staff would be required to distribute that food throughout the whole of Ireland . . . [And] what, I ask, would have been the consequence to the rest of the population of the United Kingdom? In proportion as we had been robbing other parts of the United Kingdom of the supplies of corn which would have otherwise gone to them, we should have been increasing the price to our own consumers in England and Scotland.

So far Lord John had confined himself to explaining what the Government would not do. On the following evening he announced his intention of introducing a measure to sanction the use of sugar in breweries and distilleries, with a view of reducing the consumption of barley and oats in these industries.

One night afterwards in committee of the whole House he carried resolutions suspending for a limited time the remaining duties on corn, and those provisions of the Navigation Acts which interfered with the importation of corn in foreign vessels.

These measures, which were rapidly pushed through Parliament, were founded on the doctrine of Free Trade, and were intended, in the spirit of Lord John's speech on the Address, to rely as far as possible on the ordinary operations of commerce in the crisis which had occurred. Their passage cleared the way for the Minister, and enabled him on the 25th of January to explain the permanent Irish measures which seemed to be necessary.

The crisis was unexampled. As Lord John said, there was 'a famine of the thirteenth century acting upon a population of the nineteenth.' And the remedies which had hitherto been taken had undoubtedly broken down. It had been proved impracticable to enforce labour from the people when they were paid by the day; and, when a system of payment by results was introduced, it was found that men working on the roads could earn more wages than those employed by private proprietors; and that the people were accordingly drawn from their ordinary occupations to the public works. The grossest abuses consequently prevailed.

Chorley Wood: December 10, 1846.

My dear Bessborough,—I saw Lord Lucan yesterday. He gave me a sad account of the abuses prevailing in the employment on public works—a farmer with eight beasts and some stacks of corn; others of the best farmers holding under him, &c. &c.

You must put your shoulder to the wheel to prevent such gross abuses. How can it be expected that the people of England and Scotland should continue to advance money for such purposes?—Yours,

J. R.

This result was at once so vicious and so lamentable that the Cabinet decided on no longer relying on work as a test of destitution; and instead of doing so to parcel out Ireland under relief committees charged with the duty of distributing food. The relief thus given was to be paid for out of money advanced by the State, but to be repaid by the locality. Lord John proposed, however, whenever an instalment was regularly paid, to write off an equal amount of the debt due to the Government; and thus afford an encouragement to local effort by dividing the eventual cost of relief between State and locality. In addition Lord John offered to advance money to landowners on easy terms for the improvement of their estates; and to acquire, reclaim, and sell or let in moderate-sized lots the waste lands of Ireland. But these were only the minor expedients which the crisis necessitated. Far more important was the radical alteration which Lord John proposed at the same time to make in the Irish Poor Law. Up to 1846, relief in Ireland was only given in the workhouse; and, as a preference was allowed to the aged and infirm, relief could practically never be given to able-bodied poor. Lord John decided that the guardians should be empowered to relieve the infirm out of the workhouse; and to retain the house as a test for able-bodied destitution. As, however, it was almost certain that the workhouses were not large enough to fully answer this purpose, the Poor Law commissioners were authorised, when the house was full, to make regulations for the outside relief of the able-bodied poor in kind. To these various measures Lord John joined two others, one for facilitating the sale of encumbered estates; the other for remedying some of the difficulties in the way of emigration.

But he added that these measures alone would not be sufficient.

> There are some things which the Crown cannot grant, which Parliament cannot enact: these are the spirit of self-reliance and the spirit of co-operation. I must say plainly that I should indeed despair of this task, were it not that I think I see symptoms in the Irish people both of greater reliance on their own energies and exertions, and [of] greater intelligence to co-operate with each other . . . . . Happy will it be indeed if the Irish themselves take for their maxim 'Help yourselves, and Heaven will help you,' and then I think they will find there is some use in adversity.[1]

The speech elicited warm praise. Sir Robert Inglis, rising almost immediately, declared that

> he should be specially unworthy of a seat in that House did he allow such a speech as that delivered that night by the noble Lord to pass without the expression at least of his cordial approbation.

Mr. Roebuck desired to express,

> if the noble Lord would permit so humble a person as he was to do so, his approbation of the tone and manner in which the noble Lord's statement had been made, and the feeling that characterised the whole of his speech.

[1] Lord John had already impressed the same truth on all classes of the Irish in a letter which he addressed to the Duke of Leinster, as chairman of the Agricultural Society of Ireland, on October 17, 1846. The letter is too long to quote as a whole, but the following passage is worth perusal:—

'One thing is certain. In order to enable Ireland to maintain her population, her agriculture must be greatly improved. Cattle, corn, poultry, eggs, butter, and salt provisions have been and probably will continue to be her chief articles of export. But, beyond the food exchanged for clothing and colonial products, she will require in future a large supply of food of her own growth or produce, which the labourer should be able to buy with his wages.

'In effecting this great change much good may ultimately be done. But, unless all classes co-operate and meet the infliction of Providence with fortitude and energy, the loss of the potato will only aggravate the woes and sufferings of Ireland.

'Such then is the great lesson which, by the influence of the higher classes and of such good patriots as yourself, may be taught to the Irish people. They should be taught to take advantage of the favourable conditions of their soil and surrounding sea; to work patiently for themselves in their own country, as they work in London and Liverpool for their employers; to study economy, cleanliness, and the value of time; to aim at improving the character of themselves and their children.'

Lord George Bentinck, though he at once indicated his own preference for another course, concurred

most willingly in the praises that have been bestowed both on the tone and temper, and the beautiful language that characterised the speech of my noble friend.

And Lord Clarendon writing the next day said—

G[rosvenor] C[rescent]: January 26, 1847.

My dear Lord John,—I cannot resist sending you an extract from a note I have just received from Charles [Mr. C. P. Villiers]: 'Lord John's tone, and the judgment and ability with which he proposed his measures, thoroughly conciliated the House, and all people felt pleased. He gains every day wonderfully upon the House. He has made no speech that is not a good one; and the absence of the Peel egotism (always displayed on such occasions) was much remarked upon. I have had a great many people from the country with me to-day; they all say that this week has given the Government a character for durability which it had not before, and that the idea extends that *it will do*. There is such unanimity in the House that people in it feel confident.'—Yours sincerely,

CLARENDON.

While Lord Bessborough, writing from Ireland on the 28th, said—

I am very much pleased with your speech; and so I hear everybody is who heard it. I see even Fitzstephen French, who went away vowing vengeance, was satisfied with it.

Warm, however, as was the approval which the speech won, a party in Ireland and a party in Parliament were in favour of other measures. And, as the arguments which were used by the Irish at the time have been repeated in later years, and, as well-informed Irishmen even now assert that their fellow-countrymen have neither forgotten nor forgiven the manner in which Lord John met the famine, it may be well to consider, in connection with what he did, the accusation against him for what he failed to do. It may be found in the pages of Mr. Mitchel or, in greater detail, in Father O'Rourke's 'History of the Great Irish Famine.' Briefly stated it resolves itself into four charges. It is argued that (1) the Repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846 was an injury to Ireland,

since it reduced at the moment of her trial the value of the single commodity which she had to sell. (2) Instead of this measure, the exportation of corn from Ireland should at once have been stopped. (3) Parliament should have been summoned in the autumn and legislative authority obtained (*a*) for the suspension of the Navigation Laws, (*b*) for the purchase and distribution of food. (4) The people should have been employed on productive work, instead of unproductive labour.

From an Imperial point of view it is probably sufficient to answer, that if the two first of these arguments had been attended to, famine in Great Britain would have been at once added to famine in Ireland. But from an Irish point of view their adoption would have been disastrous. The circumstance which made the famine specially deplorable was that it fell upon a population habitually subsisting on one of the cheapest kinds of food which the earth produces. It would have been no advantage to have retained for the use of the Irish the cereals which they had raised for export, unless it could be shown that no cheaper kind of food could be obtained elsewhere. If by selling a quarter of oats Ireland was able to purchase a larger equivalent in maize, rice, or other food, the interference with trade would have enhanced instead of mitigating the famine. Lord John, in fact, based his policy on the theory that interference with trade would aggravate, instead of diminishing, distress. No one who believes in free trade will doubt the propriety of his conclusion.

The same reason made him hesitate to adopt another recommendation. His own temperament and convictions disposed him to summon Parliament in the autumn of 1846, and to propose the suspension of the Navigation Acts. He did not do so because those of his friends who knew Ireland best assured him that the suspension of the Navigation Acts, three months earlier than would otherwise be possible, would not repay the injury which would be done to Ireland by giving those of her resident gentry who were doing their duty an excuse or a reason for leaving their estates, and joining their absentee fellow-landlords in London. The purchase of food

by the Government was an operation which Lord John thought could only paralyse trade. And, though it may be possible that Lord John overrated the importance of trade in remote poverty-stricken districts, where trade never came, as a general proposition every man who has faith in free trade will again believe that Lord John was right.

It was, however, the refusal of Lord John to employ the people on productive rather than on unproductive works which forms the chief reproach on his memory. Yet those who make the charge forget that, if the people were to be employed at all, it was necessary that they should be employed at once. There was no possibility of obtaining authority for making railways. What other works were immediately practicable except the arterial drainage of large tracts of land, the improvement of old roads, or the construction of new ones? Irish critics reply that the people might have been employed on cultivating the soil or on the reclamation of waste lands. If the Government had adopted the first view, it must, at once, have become the sole cultivator of all Ireland. It could not have taken upon itself the burden of cultivating the land of A without doing the same thing for B, C, D, and the remaining letters of the alphabet. Those, again, who recommended the employment of the people on reclaiming waste lands ignored the fact that the waste lands of Ireland were the property of landlords. As the landlords could not be expropriated, the waste lands could not have been reclaimed without enhancing the value of the landlord's property. And, whatever may have been said of Lord John, what would have been said if he had allowed the ratepayers of Ireland to be taxed for the purpose of adding some hundreds of thousands to the value of these landlords' property?

While then no one can read the history of the Irish Famine without deploring the suffering and the loss to which it led, and without admitting that Government failed, in the summer of 1846, to foresee the full consequences of the potato disease, it is difficult to see that the condition of Ireland would have been improved, while, in some respects, it would have been probably made worse, if Lord John had acted as his critics say that he should have acted. Yet the clamour

against him at the time was very great. Irish juries, investigating cases of death from famine, actually brought in verdicts of wilful murder against Lord John Russell. An Irish peer told Lord Clarendon that Ireland had been sacrificed to the London corndealers because Lord John was member for the City, and that no distress would have occurred if the exportation of Irish grain had been prohibited.

Such were some of the complaints made by Irish critics. In England Lord George Bentinck formulated a scheme for constructing railways throughout Ireland. He thought that the Government might advance 200*l.* at a low rate of interest on every 100*l.* of share capital subscribed; and he contended that, as the sum advanced by the Government would have preference over the capital of the companies, the State would incur little or no risk in making these advances. Lord George Bentinck's scheme came out at an unlucky moment. The circumstances of the country produced a fall in the price of consols: the capacity of the Government to borrow was consequently diminished; and the terms on which it could afford to advance money became concurrently less favourable. But there was a further and a radical objection to the whole scheme as a device for employing the destitute. As Lord John showed, only twenty-five per cent. of the money employed in constructing a railway is spent on unskilled labour. As a means, therefore, of relieving the destitute Lord George's scheme involved the expenditure of four pounds for every pound which would reach those whom it was chiefly necessary to help. While then Lord John was careful to say that he gave no opinion

> whether it is advisable for the Government, under any circumstances, to make grants of money for the promotion of railways,

he added that

> any advance made to railways should be made in a different state of the country, and in accordance with the principles on which Governments generally proceed when they are making advances on public works.

Yet Lord George Bentinck's scheme was undoubtedly popular. Many members on both sides of the House were

disposed to favour a measure which was at any rate designed to divert some portions of the vast stream of money which was being voted for Ireland to a useful purpose; and Mr. Greville, writing on February 6, only repeated the general impression that 'the railroad question may turn the Government out.' Lord John's firmness, however, made this result impossible. Summoning a meeting of his followers, he told them frankly that they might choose between the measure and himself. It is quite impossible—so he added publicly in the House of Commons—

for any Government to allow the finances of the country to be taken out of their hands. . . . I must repeat, therefore, that I do not think that I was taking an unconstitutional course when I intimated to those who I believed were disposed to support the Government that, with respect to the management of the finances of this country in this great crisis, we must have the majority of the House of Commons with us, or we cannot be competent to conduct the government of this country. . . . It is now for the House of Commons to decide whether this measure is the sole measure which is essential for the benefit of Ireland; or whether, on the contrary, the course which we are pursuing is the best calculated to promote the welfare of this country and of the whole empire.

Put in this way, the issue was no longer doubtful. Lord George Bentinck's motion was rejected by a majority of nearly three to one: and the Government again addressed itself to the prosecution of its own measures of relief.[1] Al

[1] Later on in the session, the Government agreed to advance 620,000*l.* to three Irish railways, the Great South-Western, the Waterford and Kilkenny, and the Dublin and Drogheda. The Ministry drew a distinction, which was on the whole clear, between these small advances and the larger sum which Lord G. Bentinck wished to force them to expend, the smaller advances being made on their own initiative and being covered by a very much larger called-up capital than Lord George had thought necessary. But though their own measure was, in a financial sense, as sound as Lord George's was defective, it afforded politicians an opportunity of saying that the Government, after defeating Lord George, had been forced to borrow his policy. These loans proved extremely beneficial; and Lord Clarendon on August 28 writing about one of the assisted lines said: 'There is no greater desiderandum for Ireland at this moment, nothing from which improvement may more surely be expected, than the extension of railways; and no Act of last session has produced so much good effect and gratitude as the loan of 600,000*l.*, which is attributed, as it ought to be, exclusively to your having had the courage to insist upon it in spite of all opposition and in the midst of a financial

through February these measures made substantial progress; but it gradually became evident that many persons of influence were alarmed at the prospect which one of them held out. It was feared, and there were some members of the Cabinet who shared the apprehension, that the proprietors of Ireland would be irretrievably ruined if the able-bodied poor were given a distinct claim for relief; and it was argued that Lord John himself, and the authorities on whom he chiefly relied, had frequently concurred in denouncing the policy of relieving able-bodied poor outside the workhouse. A very large number of peers and members of Parliament waited on Lord John to protest against the scheme; and, though Lord John at once replied to their arguments, he was moved by the significance of the demonstration to go over the whole ground afresh in the House of Commons. Speaking, on March 12, upon a motion to go into committee on the Relief Bill, he carefully recapitulated the measures which the Government had refused to take, and defended those which it had taken. He frankly admitted that the employment of the people on the relief works had been very great, had been unusual, and had produced many embarrassments. But on looking back at these proceedings he declared his conviction that, if this employment had not been given, many of these persons would have died from utter want of the means of procuring food. The urgency of the crisis, in other words, justified the exceptional nature of the policy. It was utterly impossible, however, that such a state of things could be permitted to continue, and the Treasury had accordingly directed the gradual abandonment of the relief works, and 20 per cent. of those employed were to be discharged on the 20th of March. No doubt many of these people would temporarily be supported by the relief committees which the Government proposed to establish, and to aid with public

crisis. Future assistance to Ireland cannot be given in a form more useful and reproductive than to railways, though perhaps it would be prudent not to make a specific application to Parliament for that purpose, but simply for an extended grant to the Exchequer Loan Commissioners to use as they may think best.' The concluding words seem to show that Lord Clarendon was aware that the policy of the Government, however beneficial, was open to the charge of inconsistency.

money in supporting. But the money of Great Britain could not be permanently applied to the support of the Irish poor; there was no hope that charity alone would be enabled to relieve all the destitute; and it was certain that there was no possibility of admitting the whole number to the workhouses. What then was to be done with the able-bodied poor of Ireland, whose food had failed, and who could never again subsist on the old conditions which had prevailed in the past? If the able-bodied were not to receive out-relief, what was to become of them?

The economical question still recurs, Who is to explain, or how is it to be explained, in what manner these destitute persons are to be maintained? I know no way in which it can be done, unless we resort to the measure before the House, guarded with all the cautions and by all the limitations which we can devise. If a person is starving, and he has recourse to the workhouse for relief, he will be admitted there, if there be room; if not, the workhouse being full, he will receive relief out of doors. This is the proposition we make to the House: and, Sir, in making this proposition to the House, I can place it on very fair grounds. . . . In the first place, no person can accuse the Houses of Parliament, . . . no person, Sir, can accuse the people of Great Britain, of want of generosity or want of liberality in the present day of suffering. . . . In the next place, I say that what I propose to you as a permanent law for the relief of the poor in Ireland is a permanent law which in England we . . . have thought consistent with the fair regard that is due to property in this country. . . I was much concerned, in the year 1834, with the Bill for the amendment of the Poor Law. But I do not remember that, while we were reforming that law, the Government of the day ever contemplated that the starving able-bodied poor should not have a claim to relief. I believe that is necessary for the peace and security of this country. I believe that a similar law would be for the peace and security of Ireland.[1]

[1] Lord John was determined to throw on the land the duty of supporting the poor. In a memorandum of July 1847, written evidently for the Cabinet, after discussing schemes for emigration and public works, he went on—

'I have always contended that public works and rates for poverty should be kept entirely distinct.

'Here again we come to the question, How are rates to be levied?

'It is impossible to say that the land can support the people and pay rent.

'But in that case I think rent should be sacrificed. Proprietors and their

These few extracts give, of course, a very imperfect idea of what Mr. Stafford O'Brien called 'the good feeling, the true dignity, the earnestness, and the calmness' of Lord John's speech.

Lord Bessborough, writing from Ireland, said—

Everybody seems pleased with your speech on the Poor Law, and I am told that nothing could be better received than it was in the House.

Sir James Graham told Mr. Greville that

John Russell's speech on the Irish Poor Law was the best thing he had done since he was Minister, and proved his competence for his high office: that he viewed with the greatest alarm the measure itself, but that in the temper of the House of Commons and the country it was inevitable; the Government could have done nothing but what they have; and, having come to this resolution, nothing could exceed the skill and judgment with which John Russell had dealt with it; and his speech had carried the question.

It was not, however, on Irish matters alone that Lord John was displaying his ascendency in debate. Only the day before that on which Mr. Greville had recorded Sir James Graham's opinion, he had written in his diary—

The Government here are going on very well. Lord John speaks excellently: the Speaker says he never saw any Government do their business so well.

While a few days previously an older friend, writing of a speech which Lord John had made on the occupation of Cracow, said—

Sloperton, Chippenham: March 1847.

My dear Lord John,—As you have no time to read letters, I will only say that in this *last* glorious burst of yours you have more than fulfilled all that *one* devoted friend of yours (writing then, for *once*, with the spirit of a true *vates*) foretold of your future course.

tenants have raised up, encouraged, and grown rich upon, a potato-fed population. Now that the question is between rent and sustenance, I think rent must give way, and the whole rental, if necessary, [be] given to support the people. Farmers will look after their own profits; they will remain the real proprietors, and then they will keep down pauperism for their own sakes.

'The solution is a terrible one; but, in some parts of the land, I believe it to be inevitable.

'J. R.'

Of this I am proud—unspeakably proud. No answer to this necessary. My kindest remembrance to Lady John. How happy she must be![1]

Lord John replied—

March 8, 1847.

My dear Moore,—I am very proud of your congratulations. It shows I have not turned quite 'black and woolly already.' I hope you and Mrs. Moore are tolerably well.—Ever yours,

J. RUSSELL.

Thus the first few months of the session of 1847 saw Lord John rise to a higher level than he had ever attained. Though, as a Minister, he had many causes for anxiety in the state of affairs both abroad and at home, he had the satisfaction of reflecting that he had done his best in a crisis of unexampled difficulty; and he had the still greater satisfaction of perceiving that the wisdom of his measures was being justified by the result, and that the Irish famine, grievous though it still was, was assuming more manageable proportions. And, while the tension on public grounds was lessening, private anxiety was also passing away. Lady John was slowly recovering from her dangerous illness, and in the middle of April, at the end of the Easter holidays, was able to go down to Richmond—where she was lodged at the Star and Garter—for change of air.

There was good reason for selecting Richmond, for on March 1 the Queen had written to Lord John and offered him Pembroke Lodge.[2] This house, which for the next thirty-one years was destined to be his home, and which is still occupied by his widow, is a familiar object to many Englishmen. Standing on an elevated terrace, its grounds command the noble prospect which Turner has illustrated with his pencil, and Scott with his pen. From this vantage point where the spires and cupolas of modern London may be seen on one side, the spectator, turning to the other, may gaze over a valley luxuriant with verdure and rich with

[1] The letter ends thus without a signature. It is, I believe, the last letter which Lord John received from his old friend, who was already failing fast. For the 'black and woolly' of Lord John's reply, see *ante*, p. 186.

[2] In the previous year the Prince had offered Bagshot to Lord John. But Lord John thought the place and house too large for his means, and refused it.

associations. For there is no land in England which has a deeper charm for the artist, the historian, or the poet than that which is watered by the river on which its capital stands.

Up to the end of the eighteenth century the site of Pembroke Lodge had been occupied by a molecatcher's cottage. Lady Pembroke, enchanted with the situation, had begged it from the King. Enlarged and repaired, it received the name of its new mistress, and was occupied by her till her death in 1831 at the age of ninety-four. It was granted in that year by William IV. to his son-in-law, Lord Erroll. Lord Erroll died in 1846; and early in the following year the Queen bestowed it on Lord John.

Lady John writes—

In March 1847 the Queen offered him Pembroke Lodge for life, a deed for which we have been yearly and daily more grateful. He and I were convinced that it added years to his life, and the happiness it has given us all cannot be measured. I think it was a year or two before the Queen offered us Pembroke Lodge, that we came down for a few days for change of air for some of the children to the Star and Garter. John and I in one of our strolls in the park sat under a big oak tree, while the children played round us. We were at that time often in perplexity about a country home for the summer and autumn, to which we could send them before we ourselves could leave London. . . . From our bench under the oak we looked into the grounds of Pembroke Lodge, and we said to one another that would be the place for us! When it became ours indeed, we often thought of this, and the oak has ever since been called the 'Wishing Tree.'. . . From the time that Pembroke Lodge became ours, we used only to keep the children in town from the meeting of Parliament till Easter, and then settle the younger ones at Pembroke Lodge, and we ourselves slept there Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays with as much regularity as other engagements allowed. This obliged us to give up most dinner engagements in London, and we regretted the consequent loss of society. At the same time he always felt the need of those evenings and mornings of rest and change and country air (besides those welcome and blessed Sundays) after Parliamentary and official toil, rather than of heated and crowded rooms, and late hours; and he had the happy power of throwing off public cares and giving his whole heart to the enjoyment of his strolls in the garden, walks and rides in the park, and the little interests of his children.

CHAPTER XVII.

IRISH WRONG.

DURING the short fortnight's holiday of Easter 1847, in which he was busying himself with the arrangements for occupying his new home, Lord John must have felt the satisfaction of the good man who is conscious of having done his duty, and of the wise man who has not suffered his head to be misled by his heart. In a crisis of unprecedented difficulty, he had refused to sacrifice principle for the sake of securing a temporary advantage; and in all his proposals had endeavoured, while battling with the distress of the moment, to promote the prosperity of the future. Some of his measures, no doubt, were attended with consequences which he did not foresee. The extension of the Poor Law furnished Irish landlords with a new reason for evicting their tenantry, and the sale of encumbered estates gave the wretched cottier, in many cases, a solvent landlord, who would not—in exchange for the insolvent proprietor who could not—do anything for his property. But Lord John's policy should be remembered not for what he did, but for what he refused to do. When men on every side of him were asking the Government to undertake the operations of the trader, and to embark on a great speculation by the construction of railways, he refused to surrender his common sense. He insisted, against the advice of his closest friends, that local distress must, in the long run, be met by local effort; and, though forced by the severity of the crisis to encourage local contributions by imperial subsidy, he clung throughout to his principle. To his firmness in doing so may be traced the fact that the famine, which decimated, raised, instead of lowering, the condition of the Irish people.

His chief agent had necessarily been the Viceroy; and Lord Bessborough, even when he had failed to agree with his chief, had given loyal support to his policy. During the few months in which he had been in Ireland, Lord Bessborough had shown that he had Lord Normanby's sympathies, and twice his capacity. In a crisis, in which many landlords were unable, or unwilling to do their duty, he had proved by his example what Irish landlords could and should do. His exertions unfortunately told severely on his health. Even before Easter he complained of great weakness; after Easter he became so ill that he had to be carried to witness experiments which he thought it his duty to inspect. Still he clung manfully to his work, and continued, while consciousness remained, to supervise everything. But he did not buoy himself up with any false hopes of recovery; and on April 28, using his daughter's pen, announced the approaching end to Lord John in the following letter:—

The Castle: April 28.

My dear John,—There is no person with whom I have lived in such entire friendship, except my own family, as with you. I wish therefore to write confidentially to you. I have never thought well of myself since the first, and am now very ill. You should therefore turn in your mind who should supply my place. I have been here long enough to see the necessity of great firmness, great decision, and not allowing myself to be turned one way or the other by the numerous representations and deputations signed by the most respectable persons, when a decision would have involved the state of the country. Above all, take care not to be guided by a love of popularity. For a year, or perhaps more, I see a great difficulty in carrying on the government of this country, but I am sure you will see the necessity of what I say.

My children are all here with me. I will write to you again in a day or two.—Very truly yours,

BESSBOROUGH.[1]

[1] Lady Emily Ponsonby, who acted as her father's amanuensis, in sending this letter to Lord John, said that he was so weak and his voice so low that she had been hardly able to put his sentences together. She hoped, however, that Lord John would see the meaning of what perhaps her father had scarcely expressed. Lord Bessborough wrote one more letter to Lord John in his own handwriting: 'My dear John,—You may be assured that no inconvenience that I can prevent shall come to the public service. You have an invaluable servant in Redington, and I

Lord Bessborough temporarily rallied after writing this affecting letter. But the rally was only the last flicker of the expiring candle. Almost immediately after receiving Lord Bessborough's letter, Lord John opened his mind to Lord Lansdowne :—

Chesham Place: May 4, 1847.

My dear Lansdowne,—The respite in Bessborough's disorder gives us a short time to consider what is to be done, and I put down in writing my own views for your consideration.

The office of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland has been one of separation, rather than of union, between the two countries. When the union with Scotland was made 140 years ago, Lord Somers prevented the continuance of the Privy Council of Scotland, arguing that, if any executive authority were retained at Edinburgh, the Union would not be complete.

Yet it was far more difficult in 1708 to communicate with Edinburgh, than it is now with Cork or Galway. As a Court, the pageant is useless, if not mischievous. The real nobility and gentry of the country have their Court in London, and not at Dublin.

As a branch of Administration the Executive of Dublin is placed in relations with Downing Street which prevent the whole truth reaching London, and conceal from the Government the real aspect of Irish affairs. In this manner the Lieutenancy tends to separation, cabal, provincial jealousies, and diversity of administration. My intimate friendship with Normanby, Fortescue, and Bessborough has mitigated, but not removed, the evil.

The Duke of Leinster, More O'Ferrall, and all the best Irishmen are in favour of the abolition of the office of Lord Lieutenant.

There has been no period, however, when this could be done with ease, and the moment before a general election seems unpropitious.

There are likewise very good reasons why the ultimate and

either see or hear a report from him every day. Crampton has allowed my second son, Frederick, to go over to-night, and I know he would not have done so last week. If you like to send for him he will tell you what he thinks of me. I did not think it possible human existence could go on under such weakness, but I assure you nothing shall be neglected. I hope our works are stopping rapidly.

Very truly yours,

'B.'

Lord Bessborough's handwriting, never of the clearest, was so indistinct when he wrote this that I am not sure that I have deciphered all the words accurately.

decisive step should not now be taken. The arrangement ought to be part of a whole, and combined with other enactments for the organisation of the country.

You will see by the enclosed letter that Bessborough has himself considered the question of his successor, and that he considers firmness as absolutely necessary.

A Secretary of State, acting with colleagues in London, will have far better means of resisting deputations, memorials, &c. than a Lord Lieutenant in Dublin.

Upon the whole, my opinion is that the office should be offered to Clarendon, with a notice that he is to be made into a Secretary of State in the first session of a new Parliament: and that, if he should decline, it should be offered in the same way to Morpeth. The intention of considering the propriety of abolishing the office cannot be kept secret, but no Bill need be introduced in the present session. Yours truly,

J. RUSSELL.

Lord Lansdowne, writing on the 5th, concurred in Lord John's views, though he added the proviso that the Secretary of State should reside in Ireland during the vacation; and Lord John offered the office to Lord Clarendon on these conditions.

Confidential] May 12, 1847.

My dear Lansdowne,—I have seen Clarendon, and he will undertake the difficult and odious task of the Lieutenancy of Ireland, having in view the permanent arrangement which I mentioned to you. . . .

The accounts of Bessborough are as bad as possible, and some parts of the country, I am sorry to say, are in a state of disturbance. They throw away the cooked food,[1] these starving people.—Yours, J. R.

Four days after this letter was written, Lord Bessborough passed away, and Lord Clarendon entered on the Vice-royalty.

In the meanwhile Lord John, leaving wife and children at Richmond, was returning to Chesham Place for the active duties of the session. Before Easter, Parliament had been

[1] In giving food to the people, the Government decided, instead of issuing meal, which was of course saleable, to cook the porridge—cooked meal rapidly becoming sour and therefore unsaleable.

mainly occupied with Irish measures. After Easter Ireland still engrossed a large share of attention, but Lord John found time to deal with other subjects of importance. It has already been shown in this biography how, from the first dawn of his Parliamentary career, he had recognised the obligation of the State to encourage the education of the people. He had been a member of the Government which had voted the first sum of public money ever applied to that purpose. In 1839 he had led the Government which had first proposed the supervision of elementary schools by the State. But the steps which had been thus taken had done more to improve the quantity than the quality of education. Government grants had encouraged the building of schools, but they had failed to raise the status or the qualifications of the teacher. On his return to office in 1846, Lord John, after conference with Lord Lansdowne, determined to revise the whole system. By two minutes of Council, issued in August and December of that year, it was decided, in lieu of the old building grants, to give grants to schools reported efficient by the inspector; and to replace the unpaid monitors, who had been entrusted with the task of teaching what they themselves had not learned, by paid pupil-teachers, apprenticed to the work, and entitled, when the term of apprenticeship was over, to compete for scholarships tenable in training colleges. The teacher so trained, on returning to a school, was to receive a grant from the State in augmentation of his salary. These regulations provided for the first time in England a trained body of elementary school teachers. They were explained by Lord John on April 19, 1847. His explanation led to a debate, protracted over four nights, in which a small minority opposed the scheme, as increasing the influence of the State and the power of the Church. In the end, however, Lord John's course was approved, and he had the satisfaction of reflecting that he had

> made an attempt to diminish the empire of ignorance, and to raise the people of this country in the scale of religion and virtue among the nations of the globe.

So far all had gone well with the Government and its

leader. But during the succeeding three months of the session the affairs of the Ministry were not equally prosperous. In the first place, before the close of April, the rapid fall in the value of securities was deranging the money market, and a financial crisis is never favourable to the popularity of an Administration; in the next place an anxiety to introduce many measures interfered with the success of some of them, and Ministers were forced ultimately to abandon many reforms which they had declared to be of importance; and, in the third place, Lord John, perhaps annoyed at these circumstances, displayed a coldness of manner to his supporters which, however characteristic of the man, was unfortunate for the Minister, and on one occasion even was drawn into an attack upon Mr. Hume, which, to say the least, was indiscreet, and which was described at the time as savage.[1]

Yet the session of 1847 is now recollected not for its failures, which attracted some attention at the time, but for the successes which have left their permanent mark on the statute book. It was in 1847 that the Ten Hours Bill was passed, and it was to Lord John that its passage was largely attributable. Three years before, his advocacy of the measure, made at the risk of causing schism in his party, had helped to procure Lord Ashley his first majority. In 1846, just before the change of Government, Lord John had again warmly supported the Ten Hours Clause. Lord Ashley wrote to him on this occasion—

May 25, 1846.

My dear Russell,—You must allow me to thank you very sincerely, in the name of those whom I have so long represented, for your speech and support on Friday last.

It was a good work and worthy of your public and private station. I can do no more than heartily pray that it will please Almighty God to give to you and to your children that consolation and relief you have endeavoured to obtain for others.—Yours very truly,

ASHLEY.

[1] Lord John called Mr. Hume 'a chartered libertine,' and expressed a hope 'that there was not one person of importance, either in the House or out of the House, who would pay attention to' charges preferred by him (*Hansard*, xciv. 110). Mr. Greville calls this attack 'savage' (2nd series, vol. iii. p. 96).

And it was Lord John's accession to office, more than any other circumstance. which secured the passage of the measure in the session of 1847.

Nor was this the only legislative subject which received decisive treatment in that year. When Lord John left office in 1841, the agitation against the new Poor Law had prevented the adoption of any permanent measure for the institution of a central control. During Sir Robert Peel's Administration the question was left unsettled, the existing Poor Law Commission being continued for a period of five years. In 1847 Lord John succeeded in bringing the commission more directly under Parliamentary supervision by giving its president and one of its secretaries a seat in one or other House of Parliament.[1]

These and other measures fully occupied the time of an expiring Parliament. For the remarkable Parliament of 1841 was completing the sixth year of its existence. Elected to support the interests of Protection, it had committed itself to a policy of Free Trade. Chosen to substitute Sir Robert Peel for Lord John, it had restored Lord John to the position from which Sir Robert had driven him ; and there was therefore urgent reason for desiring to ascertain whether the change of front, adopted in the House, was approved by the electors.

Parliament was accordingly prorogued on the 23rd, and dissolved on the 24th of July. With some hesitation, and against the advice of many of his friends, Lord John decided on appealing to the electors of the great city which had chosen him in 1841 and re-elected him in 1846. There were, indeed, ample reasons for hesitation on his own part. Parties in the City were known to be evenly divided ; and the result of the contest would, under any circumstances, be doubtful, and might be disastrous. Even a victory would not be without inconvenience to the Prime Minister. For one of the Liberal candidates was Baron Rothschild. The oaths, which every member of Parliament was required to take, made it

[1] In the same year the cost of sustaining the poor, who had acquired a settlement by residence under an Act of 1846, was transferred from the parish to the union.

impossible for a Jew to sit in the House of Commons; and the election of Baron Rothschild was calculated, therefore, to produce the same dilemma which had followed that of Mr. O'Connell for Clare twenty years before. Lord John, however, never hesitated to grasp the nettle. Three days before the prorogation, on the 20th of July, the sixth anniversary of his wedding day, he addressed a stormy meeting at the London Tavern, and nine days afterwards he had the satisfaction of being returned at the head of the poll.[1]

Lord John, so soon as the result was known, drove down with Lady John to Richmond.

When the children heard and understood the news, their spirits rose to the highest pitch. They danced, hurrahed, put a big wreath on John's head, and sang 'the Conquering Hero,' &c.

It was almost a necessary consequence of a general election that one or two of the supporters of the Government should be advanced in or raised to the peerage. Lord John decided on promoting Lord Strafford to an earldom, and on conferring the dignity of baron on Sir R. B. Philipps, and on the eldest son of Lord Gosford; and on giving an English peerage to Lord Cremorne. As Sir R. B. Philipps had no son, the permanent addition to the roll of Peers was hardly appreciable. It elicited, however, the following remonstrance:—

Private]

My dear Lord John,—I see you have recommenced the inroad upon the House of Peers so unsparingly practised by the previous Whig Government, and which, together with the submersion of the baronetage, I have always heard added deservedly to its unpopularity.

How much more dignified Sir Robert Peel's practice of conferring peerages for merit only, and not for political subserviency.—Believe me, most truly yours,

WESTMINSTER.

Motcombe House, Shaftesbury: September 7, 1847.

Lord John replied—

[1] The final numbers were: Russell 7,137, Pattison 7,030, Rothschild 6,792, Masterman (Conservative) 6,722, Larpent (Liberal) 6,719.

Pembroke Lodge: September 9, 1847.

My dear Lord Westminster,—Your letter is sharp, and written in much ignorance of the subject you treat of; but, as I have a sincere regard for your good opinion, I will give you some explanations upon it.

1. In the first place you may not be aware that there are at this moment just the same number of British peers that there were when I took office. Lord Tadcaster (Thomond), Lord Prudhoe, Lord Metcalfe, are replaced by Lord Cremorne, Lord Acheson, and Sir R. B. Philipps.

2. I cannot think it would be right, politic, or even safe, to shut up the House of Lords like the Great Council of Venice. We know that the attempt was once made; had it been successful, Sir Richard Grosvenor would never have been a peer.

3. But you think it would have been wise to have acted as Sir Robert Peel did—namely, confine the peerage to those who have signalised themselves by military or civil service.

In my opinion, if that course had been followed for fifty years, the House of Lords would have been at an end at that time; for these men of distinguished merit are not, in these days, men of much property; and a House of Lords, the majority of which neither possess large property nor represent large masses, would be so factious, mischievous, and restless that public opinion would step in and put it down.

4. The real difficulty has arisen from the profusion of Pitt and his successors. In forty-six years they created about forty earls and viscounts and about 120 barons, altogether an addition of 160 to the House of Lords. In this body the Tory element was so predominant that Lord Grey and his Cabinet advised the creation of fifty peers at once. We who advised the measure all thought it a very dangerous one, but it was the sequel of the Pitt profusion.

5. Lord Grey and Lord Melbourne remedied the evil to some extent by copious creations. Sir R. Peel again in a quarter of a year's administration made three or four peers. When he returned to power in 1841 he came in as the champion of the cause of Protection, the cause most dear to the House of Lords, and had, therefore, no occasion to make peers.

6. There does not seem to me to be at present any occasion to make a considerable number of peers. But, though it may be very well for you, who have got a comfortable seat in a front row, to call out 'Shut the door, and don't let any more in,' it is not fair to the great body of English, Irish, and Scotch gentlemen to say that they shall ever be excluded from honours unless they command in a

field of battle or distinguish themselves in the government of a colony.

I will not notice your last hint about 'political subserviency' further than to say that it has at all times been considered a virtue in England to act honestly in party connection and to preserve consistency upon public affairs. This is a long yarn, but you have brought it upon yourself.—Yours,

J. RUSSELL.

The position of the Whigs was slightly strengthened by the general election of 1847; but they were still dependent on the support which continued to be extended to them by Sir Robert Peel. Under ordinary circumstances the new Parliament would have hardly been summoned before the commencement of 1848; but in 1847 a financial crisis compelled the Ministry to call it together in November. Forced by the pressure in the City to authorise the Bank to infringe the provisions of the Act of 1844, it was compelled to ask Parliament to accord to its directors the indemnity which it promised to obtain for them. In the event, indeed, the mere knowledge that the Bank was authorised by the Government to infringe the law averted the necessity for infringing it. When it was once understood that the Bank was armed with exceptional resources for resisting the strain upon it, confidence returned; and, though a few men blamed the Government for suggesting or sanctioning a breach of the Act, and a few others found fault with them for not acting with more speed, most persons approved both the policy and the time at which it was adopted.

Thus when Parliament met in November the cause which had necessitated its assembling created little anxiety. But unfortunately a new demand had arisen for other legislation. 'The old eternal difficulty had recurred in Ireland. Famine had been followed by discontent, discontent had produced disorder, and the landlords who lived on their property as well as those who had deserted their duty were clamouring for coercion.'[1]

Since his appointment Lord Clarendon had been in almost daily communication with the Prime Minister. His numerous

[1] This language is reproduced from a previous work.

letters from Ireland are still among the Russell papers. During the first few months of his Viceroyship they are chiefly occupied with the details of the battle which authority was waging against famine, and with projects for the improvement of the Irish soil or of the Irish people; but in the latter half of October they drew attention to the difficulty of repressing disturbances.

In Clare and Limerick there have been several tumultuous assemblages. Mobs of 500 to 1,000 persons, most of them armed, have gone to people's houses, and have carried off their corn and cattle, uprooted their crops (turnips, &c.), and threatened their lives. I communicated directly with Blakeney and MacGregor upon this, and told them that, at whatever cost, we must protect life and property; and I hope that to-day or to-morrow the whole of the disturbed districts will be militarily occupied. As far as possible I want to check the spirit of insubordination before the winter sets in, and to make the disaffected feel that the law is a reality. But crime and poverty are advancing upon us, and great exertions will be required in order not to be overwhelmed by them. They shall be made. I hope they may be successful. But I defy any one to tell now what will be the state of the country or what difficulties we shall have to contend with two months hence.

Five days later, on the 23rd of October, he wrote as follows:—

Things are growing rapidly worse, and it would really seem as if all people combined to aggravate existing evils and to create fresh difficulties. Throughout Limerick and Clare and parts of Tipperary and King's County there is a savage spirit of disaffection and tumultuous assemblages of persons, the majority not in distress, but having no other object than to plunder, and compel the resumption of public work. . . . Altogether I feel as if I was at the head of a provisional government in a half-conquered country.

On the 26th of October, writing on other subjects, he added—

There are fresh murders every day, and from parts of the country the accounts of distress are really horrible;

and on the 30th of October—

The increase of crime and the frequency of murders are really frightful. The police and the military do what they can, but they are almost powerless where the whole population (*i.e.* in the disturbed

districts), either from sympathy or fear, are leagued for the protection of malefactors. An account came yesterday of a large gang with their faces blackened, and without shoes or stockings to prevent their approach being heard, having committed seventeen outrages upon dwellings in one night; and there is not the slightest clue to them, for one might as well try to catch so many devils. It is a curious thing that increased temperance is the cause of getting less information. People half drunk used to make partial revelations, and when sober and frightened at what they had done used to tell all.

I am proceeding with as much vigour as the law will permit, and hitherto with some success. . . . There is, of course, great alarm in the public mind. . . . I wish I dared suspend the Habeas Corpus, or take up people on suspicion. I believe we must have some sort of Arms Bill, though different from any of the ineffectual measures that have hitherto been tried. MacGregor desires it; he reckons there are not so little as 300,000 stand of arms in the possession of the people. They fire at marks all day long; and, driving now through Tipperary or Limerick, one might think one was in England on the first of September.

Some days after this letter was written, Mr. Reeve, who had been staying with Lord Clarendon at Dublin, called at Pembroke Lodge, which on Sundays was always open to visitors, and, in the words of Lady John's diary—

rather alarmed us by his account of Lord Clarendon's proposed measures to put a stop to the murders and disorders in Ireland—all of the old and often-tried coercive and despotic kind, which do not even pretend to go to the root of the evil.

Lord John at once wrote to Lord Clarendon, who, replying on the 10th, said—

I am sorry that Reeve should have alarmed you. It was very unnecessary, as the idea of taking any step beyond the law for the suppression of outrage without your consent would never have occurred to me any time, much less just before the meeting of Parliament. But Reeve was naturally struck by the panic caused by Major Mahon's murder, by the notices of a similar fate that have been served upon other gentlemen (some of them . . . as good landlords as any in the world), and by the horrible system of intimidation that prevails. . . .

My great object and all my anxiety are to restore order by the law as it now stands; but if I find it insufficient, if the spirit of disaffection

and insubordination spread, and the present anarchical tendencies increase, I must then ask for some extraordinary powers. I am as much averse to a Coercion Bill as you can be; for I know that by the time it is debated and mutilated in Parliament, and clamoured and written against here, it loses all moral force and is looked upon as a tyrannical abuse of power. I shall, therefore, never propose a Coercion Bill to you. If things become intolerably bad I believe that Parliament would more willingly grant, and I am sure that this country would more willingly submit to, a suspension of the Habeas Corpus—to be acted on under the strict responsibility of the Lord Lieutenant or the Government—than any of the old or cumbrous machinery of coercion to be set at work by the local magistracy.

Lord Clarendon went on to say that he would supplement this provision, (1) by imposing a fine, to be levied summarily on the district, and 'apply it to the relief of the murdered or robbed man's family, or to the payment of the force stationed in the district;' (2) by refusing arms to all except householders; (3) by requiring householders to take out a license for their use, and by registering them at the nearest police station; and (4) by 'penal clauses against going about at night in disguise or with blackened faces.'

On the day on which Lord Clarendon was thus writing to Lord John, Lord John was writing to Lord Clarendon:—

Chesham Place: November 10, 1847.

My dear Clarendon,—I received yesterday your assurance that you would not do anything without the consent of the Cabinet.

You are entitled to receive from me in return the communication of my whole view of your present situation.

I am not averse to stringent measures if they can be made effectual for their immediate purpose, and at the same time a groundwork can be laid for permanent improvement.

I hold these two conditions inseparably connected. A mere suppression of the violent symptoms of a disease which has continued from 1760 to the present time is an aggravation rather than a cure of the organic disorder. It satisfies the landlord class, and they are thereby encouraged to worse atrocities than before. But now let us take each subject in order.

1. An Act for keeping people at home at night is tyranny without purpose. An Act for restraining the use of arms could only be useful as a subsidiary measure. The suspension of the Habeas Corpus

Act used to be recommended by More O'Ferrall and others as an effective coercion act. The question is, would it be effectual? Sir Samuel Romilly in 1807 pointed out how inapplicable a measure intended to catch the heads of a rebellion was to a set of artisans who were not more the heads of a conspiracy than hundreds of their fellow workmen.

Is it different in Ireland? The evil is a social one, prompting the millions and their priests to hate, to denounce, and to slay the few who are their masters. Can you say that the arrest of any twenty or fifty or even a hundred of the leaders would paralyse the criminal conspiracy? Are these leaders known? Can Colonel MacGregor give a list of those men who planned the murder of Mr. Roe and Major Mahon? Is the defect one of legal evidence only? What has been the effect of the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act in former years? Upon this you might ask Lord Plunket, or if he is too infirm the Chancellor, Judge Perrin, or any other of the older Whigs. But at all events let us not take such a step in a hurry or without having proved the efficacy of the law to the utmost.

2. Next as to the source of all this crime. It is plain that the multitude consider the landlords as enemies to be shot; the priests denounce them as heretics to be cursed; and the assassin, having public opinion and what he considers religion in his favour, has no remorse. The only fear he is likely to have—that of the gallows—is diminished by the general sympathy and overbalanced by the payment of a few pounds from the assassin club of the county. Now, whence is this enmity? From the mischievous custom of growing paupers and potatoes on the soil, and from the violent means taken by the landlords to extirpate the evil.

The mischievous custom has received a check from the failure of the potatoes, the consequent disinclination to pay rent for conacre, and from the poor law, which provides a chance of work and an alternative of relief.

That which presses at present is the habit of driving out cottier tenants from their homes without compensation or prospect of employment.

It is clear to me that you do not meet this evil by the best law possible giving tenants compensation for improvements. Lord Lansdowne says very truly that in the greater number of cases of small tenants no improvement has been made. In fact you might as well propose that a landlord should compensate the rabbits for the burrows they have made on his land.

Therefore it seems to me that a remedy for this evil must strike deeper and wider. It must embrace all who have occupied the land for a certain number of years (say five), and must give them something like the tenant right of Ulster.

This, I know, is a transfer of property; but it is founded on a right acknowledged in the North, the most peaceful and orderly province of Ireland. It has, therefore, a foundation of custom, which is a great advantage. To explain my meaning more precisely I should say—

1. That no man who has occupied land exceeding a quarter of an acre more than five years shall be ejected without a payment for his tenure of the soil.

2. That such payment shall not exceed five years' rent, and that any rent due shall be deducted from the payment.

3. That a tenant may part with his tenure and that the payment shall be registered. The landlords to have in such case all the rights now possessed according to the custom of Ulster.

One advantage of this would be to restrict the excessive payments which cripple the incoming tenant.

I am sure that neither the Bill you have directed to be prepared nor that of the Cabinet would go far to meet the existing evil. My cure is objectionable in the extreme; but the evil is deep-seated and by ordinary means irremediable. I think that the political franchises on which we so long pondered and legislated were not directed to the cure of the specific evils of Ireland, and that the discontent of the poorer tenantry has been the pabulum upon which agitation for repeal has fed, fattened, and flourished. O'Connell led the multitude first to a repeal of Catholic disabilities, but ever after by fixing their minds on repeal he misdirected their energy.

At present there is no combined party for repeal, but the cry for separation is likely to grow. Can we not stifle it in the cradle by large measures of redress?—Yours truly,

J. RUSSELL.

Lord Clarendon, writing on the 12th, replied—

I desire no Coercion Bill. The objections to it are valid and numerous; but, if extra power is to be asked for from Parliament, I think it should be the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. . . . Upon the most mature deliberation, however, I have come to the conclusion that some legislative enactments are necessary . . . I send herewith the heads of three Bills which, I hope, will be no undue encroachment upon constitutional liberty, and which may be the

means of restoring and maintaining order, the first condition of social existence. . . . No. 1 is a Bill for limiting the use of arms, or perhaps I should say for leaving them in the hands of those who may fairly require them. . . . No. 2 is a project for making localities responsible for their crimes. . . . No. 3 is a Bill respecting the constabulary which tells its own story.

Lord John replied—

Chesham Place: November 15, 1847.

My dear Clarendon,—I have received your drafts of Bills, and have just talked them over with George Grey.

We see great difficulty in carrying your Arms Bill into effect. How are the people to be disarmed all over Ireland? They would of course conceal their arms; and assassination would go on as before. Recollect that the Coercion Acts, or, as they were called, Insurrection Acts, from the Union to 1830, and Lord Grey's Coercion Act of 1833, and Sir R. Peel's Coercion Act of 1846, were all based on the number of murders which took place during the existence of Arms Acts. In fact, I have little faith in this remedy, though no insurmountable objection to it *per se*.

It is, however, most unwise to throw away extraordinary powers. Those that are asked should be effectual for their purpose and confined to that purpose.

In this last view G. Grey thinks the restrictions as to the use of arms should be confined to counties, or districts proclaimed by the Lord-Lieutenant as disturbed. He is going to see the Attorney-General this morning on the subject, and I have furnished him with your drafts.

The suspension of the Habeas Corpus you show might be made efficacious, provided the leaders peached against each other as you suppose.

But I am not ready to bring in any restrictive law without at the same time restraining the powers of the landlord.

It is quite true that landlords in England would not like to be shot like hares and partridges by miscreants banded for murderous purposes. But neither does any landlord in England turn out fifty persons at once, and burn their houses over their heads, giving them no provision for the future. The murders are atrocious; so are the ejectments. The truth is that a civil war between landlords and tenants has been raging for eighty years, marked by barbarity on both sides.

I am willing to finish the contest, if it can be finished, by leaving the law to its operation, by the gradual influences of civilisation, by

introducing and fostering education. But if stringent laws are required they must bear on both sides in the contest.

I have drawn up without consulting any one the heads of a measure I should like to see proposed. It is, no doubt, unskilfully drawn, but it will give you a notion of what I wish to see. It is a plan for giving some security and some provision to the miserable cottiers who are now treated as brute beasts.

We have unhappily very little time, and the Queen's speech must take notice of these things in general terms.

J. R.

Two days afterwards Lord John added—

Downing Street: November 17, 1847.

My dear Clarendon,—I still think we may defer our Irish measures (except the constabulary) till after the Christmas holidays. But if we bring in the restrictive measures we must introduce the conciliatory measures at the same time. We were told in 1833—and I was carried away by the notion—that the protection of life would not admit of delay. But when the restrictive measures are passed the landlords will defeat the remedial measures.

Therefore, if it be necessary to introduce any strong measures before Christmas, a Landlord and Tenant Bill must likewise be introduced, and you must answer me on that subject; and explain why the tenant right of Ulster cannot be legalised or my form of it introduced.

Thus my conclusions are—

1. Not to introduce restrictive measures till their necessity is absolutely proved, and then to make them effectual.

2. To introduce a Bill of Landlord and Tenant at the same time as any restrictive measure.

J. R.

On the following day, Lord John explained his proposals to Lord Lansdowne:—

Downing Street; Nov. 18, 1847.

My dear Lansdowne,—I wish to explain to you better than I have hitherto done my views as to the state of Ireland.

The evil now existing in that country, horrible as it is, is not new. Nor can it be remedied by restrictive and coercive measures, or it would have been remedied long ago. The armoury of penal legislation is full of the weapons of past battles, and the victory of order and peace is not gained.

It seems to me then that, whatever our measures for suppressing crime may be, we ought to endeavour to lay a groundwork for future social harmony.

The war between landlord and tenant has been carried on for eighty years. It is evident that this relation, which ought to be one of mutual confidence, is one of mutual hostility; nor do I see that they can be left to fight out the battle with any prospect of better result. Murder on one side: ejectment on the other—are as common as ever.

I propose, therefore, that a judicial authority should be interposed between landlord and tenant in every case of ejectment.

The propositions would run thus :—

1. That a tenant upon whom notice of ejectment is issued shall be empowered to appeal to the assistant barrister.

2. That the assistant barrister thereupon shall give notice to the sheriff, and the sheriff shall not be empowered to execute any writ of ejectment until he receives a certificate from the [assistant barrister].

3. That if it shall appear, upon hearing the case, that more than one year's rent is due from the tenant to the landlord, the assistant barrister shall at once issue his certificate to the sheriff, and the ejectment may proceed.

The letter is incomplete; but that part of it which has been preserved is remarkable because it partially anticipates by nearly a quarter of a century the legislation of 1870.

Lord Clarendon was, in the meanwhile, writing to Lord John :—

V. R. Lodge: November 17, 1847.

My dear Lord John,—On the 13th you wrote me word that Sir G. Grey and you were of opinion that I had better have an Arms Bill drawn according to the sketch I sent you. On the 15th you told me that the more you and he consider it, the less justification do you find for an Arms Bill; and I will not disguise from you how much I am surprised, and I may add disheartened, by this; nor do I understand how any Government can think it expedient to leave 300,000 arms in possession of some of the most ferocious people on earth at the commencement of a winter when there will be great poverty and little employment, when armed outrages are increasing every day, when almost every post brings an account of some fresh murder, and when the reign of terror is so complete that all those who are unable to fly from the disturbed districts must purchase their existence by the surrender of their rights. This is no exaggeration whatever of the state of Tipperary, Limerick, and parts of Clare,

Roscommon, and King's County. I have had a deputation of gentlemen from Tipperary with me to-day; and, although they told me nothing I did not know before, yet the description of these men—some of them doomed to die—and of another (Mr. Garvey) who escaped by a miracle last week, three blunderbusses having been discharged at him, which, however, only shot the policeman accompanying him, gave me an idea of society such as I am sure has no parallel in Europe. . . . Two Sundays before Major Mahon was murdered he was denounced by name from the altar, called *worse than a Cromwell*, 'and yet,' said the priest, '*this man lives.*' From this very priest, however, I have seen letters for the *last ten years* to Major Mahon blessing him for his kindness to the people and to himself; but he (M.) last year discovered some irregularities in the management of the relief fund by the priest, who then vowed vengeance against him. Major M.'s estate, which he has only possessed two years, has been long and notoriously ill managed; and, as I have no doubt it will be alluded to in Parliament, I have procured and send you the report made to him by his agent when he took possession, and the proceedings since adopted, which do not seem to me to be worthy of death. I send you also a report that has been furnished to me by a very old friend of yours and mine (but who begged I would not mention his name) upon the conspiracy not to pay rents. I send likewise the report of an experienced constabulary inspector upon the state of Tipperary, which, together with the letter I sent you from General Napier, the opinions of men of all classes and parties, of Sir E. Blakeney, Colonel MacGregor, and, if you attach any weight to it, of myself, must, I should think, lead you to consider that the existing law does not give sufficient power to protect life and property in certain districts, and that it is most imprudent to leave the people armed as they now are. . . . I can hold out no hope of tranquillity being restored if some further power is not given to the Executive Government in Ireland.

Before this letter was despatched the Cabinet had met.

V.R. Lodge: November 18, 1847.

My dear Lord John,—I have received your letter, in which you tell me that the Cabinet has approved of the Constabulary Bill, has rejected the Arms Bill, and has not considered the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. . . . The Arms Bill is rejected upon two grounds which prove two things: first, that the Cabinet has little or no confidence in my reports or opinions; and second, that the decision has been come to upon insufficient or incorrect information. You say that I should not get the arms from the people whom I wish to disarm.

. . . Now I believe that by a registration of arms and power to search for them a great number of people would be disarmed. . . . All persons agree that next to disarming the people compelling them to conceal their arms is the best thing; for they do so in bogs and ditches and wet thatch; and the gun is not ready for the victim, nor is its effect fatal always, as it is now. Colonel MacGregor says that when the possession of arms was restricted the gun constantly misfired, and most of those seized have been a mass of rust. Now the gun always goes off. All the weapons that the people openly carry about are seen to be in perfect order, and the assassins are such practised marksmen that the victims are never missed. . . . The Cabinet did not entertain the question of suspending the Habeas Corpus Act because I had not proposed it; but I did not do so, nor any other Coercion Bill, not because I thought the present law sufficient, but because I hoped the further power I asked for would have been granted.

I sent over a third Bill for imposing penalties for outrages; but, as you do not allude to it, I conclude it was not taken into consideration. I need not trouble you with any expression of regret at the decision taken by the Cabinet to leave things here to the ordinary course of law. To me it seems to involve much danger to Ireland and discredit to the Government. . . . As soon as I can see the Chancellor and Attorney-General I will with them make myself master of the law as it now stands, or rather of the utmost limits to which it can be stretched; and, if I think that there is any prospect of its being sufficient, I shall do my utmost to work with that alone, for my sincere wish is to save you from embarrassment. But if I do not see any reasonable ground for believing that I can perform the duties of Government in maintaining the law, and affording some protection to life and property, I cannot, and I am sure you will not ask me to, remain here when I feel my power of usefulness is gone. . . .—Yours sincerely,

CLARENDON.

On the two following days Lord Clarendon again wrote long and earnest letters on the demoralisation of the country and on the desire of all classes for coercion. But, before these letters reached London, the Cabinet had partly given way. It decided on a measure empowering the Viceroy to proclaim a disturbed district, and in a proclaimed district to increase the constabulary force at the cost of the ratepayers. In such a district the carrying of arms without a license

was to be illegal. When a murder was committed the justices were authorised to require all male persons from sixteen to sixty years of age to aid them in searching for the murderer.

A paragraph was at once added to the Queen's Speech, which was delivered on the 23rd of November, asking 'the assistance of Parliament in taking further precautions against the perpetration of crime in certain counties and districts of Ireland.'

Lord Clarendon was satisfied with this compromise. He wrote on the 21st—

> I am very glad to learn the decision of the Cabinet;

and on the 23rd—

> Many thanks for the Speech, which seems to me a very good one. Considering the moment at which Parliament is called together, and the untoward circumstances in which the country is placed, I hope that people will, upon the whole, be satisfied, and that the Speech will tend to restore confidence here as well as in England. Some Irish beggars and landlords will be angry that there is no money and too little coercion offered, but the moderate of all classes will, I think, be content. *I know I am, for one.*

These extracts from Lord Clarendon's letters have been given at some length, because Lord John's conduct on this occasion has been attacked on two grounds: first, Lord Clarendon himself, writing to Mr. Greville at the end of November, declared that (1) the Bills which he had sent over had been ignored by the Cabinet; (2) he expected that the Bill which had been passed would prove unsatisfactory to all parties; (3) his own threat of immediate resignation had alone produced an immediate change; (4) a good deal of time had afterwards been lost in determining the best form of repression.[1] But, if the letters and dates be carefully compared, it will be seen that, on November 10, Lord Clarendon had not made up his mind as to the necessity of coercion; that, so far from the Bills which he had sent over having been ignored by the Cabinet, they had been carefully considered, and one of them conceded;

[1] I think that these are fair statements of the points in Lord Clarendon's letter, which is given *in extenso* in Greville, 2nd series, iii. 104.

that, so far from the Bill ultimately adopted proving unsatisfactory to all parties, he had himself told Lord John that he was content, and that the moderates of all classes would be content, with it; that, so far from the Bill having been conceded on his own threat of immediate resignation, it had been adopted before the possibility of his having to resign could have been known in London; and that, so far from a good deal of time having been subsequently lost, the measure adopted on the 19th was announced in the Speech on the 23rd, introduced into the House of Commons on the 29th, and passed before the Christmas recess. Most well-informed people will think that Lord Clarendon displayed exceptional vigour and capacity during a viceroyalty of extraordinary difficulty; but those who compare the complaints which he poured out to Mr. Greville at the end of November with the facts which his own letters to Lord John disclose will be disposed to conclude that, amidst the panic and clamour with which he was surrounded, he temporarily lost the cool judgment for which he was usually distinguished.[1]

But there is another and more serious charge made against Lord John in connection with this subject. It is assumed, with much force, that a Minister who acceded to office on the defeat of Sir Robert Peel's Coercion Bill should not have introduced a measure of repression himself. Sir Theodore Martin writes, for instance—

Bitterly were the Government now compelled to expiate their vote on the Coercion Bill, by which the Peel Ministry had been over-

[1] It is true that Lord Clarendon, writing to Lord John on the last day of November, probably the very day on which he wrote to Mr. Greville, under the influence of 'the news of another atrocious murder'—that of Mr. Lloyd—said—

'It is impossible to say beforehand what legislation will prove effectual to check such a state of things; but it is quite clear, and I hope you are now convinced, that the ordinary law is not sufficient.'

And again—

'I am still afraid that your Bill will not prove sufficient and that you may get some unpopularity (only, however, in a party point of view) without effectually checking outrage.'

But these paragraphs in no way impugn the conclusion in the text that on the 23rd (the day on which the Address was debated in Parliament) he had expressed himself content with the measures of the Government.

thrown. Without the power which they had themselves helped to withhold, they found themselves unable to grapple with the outrages upon life and property;

while another writer has declared that the Whig Ministry was compelled to ask Parliament

to grant them powers at least as great as those which at their instigation had been refused to their predecessors.

Writers of this kind seem to have spared themselves the trouble of referring to the Statute Book.[1] Whether Lord John was justified in giving Lord Clarendon increased powers or not, it is certain that the powers which he gave him were widely different from those which Sir Robert Peel had demanded in 1846 and to which the Whigs had chiefly objected. They did not contain any provision for compensating the victims of outrages at the expense of the ratepayers: they did not render persons congregated in public-houses or carrying arms liable to arrest: above all they did not comprise the brutal clause which made persons out of doors at night liable to transportation.

The mild measure, to which Lord John assented, was moreover forced on him by universal clamour. Mr. Greville said—

If they had met Parliament and proposed nothing they would have been swept away in a whirlwind of indignation.

Lord Campbell, who shared Lord John's reluctance to propose exceptional measures, wrote—

There have been frequent Cabinets of late, chiefly on the subject of Ireland. I have strongly combated *coercion*, for which there is a call from all quarters. I preach up a more vigorous exercise of the existing powers of law to prevent, to detect, and to punish crime. Lord John's views are very constitutional and enlightened;

while Lady John, who knew her husband's mind better than any one, wrote in her diary—

November 19. Early walk with John in Eaton Square. After

[1] In justice to others, I ought to add that I myself have insufficiently emphasised, in another work, the distinction which I have drawn in the text between the coercive measures of Sir Robert Peel's and Lord John Russell's Administrations.

dinner took him to the Cabinet, where the important decision was come to of having a district Arms Bill for Ireland. This is painful enough ; but better, far better, than what Lord Clarendon proposes, which would justly lose the Whigs their character as regards Ireland, and begin a new series of coercive measures not touching the root of the evil. The murders are dreadful, and the more dreadful they are the more pressing the duty of Ministers to attack their causes.

These words, which it may be assumed expressed Lord John's conclusions as well as their author's, were no empty opinion. Four days later Lord John, speaking in the House of Commons, repeated the declaration which he had already privately made to the Viceroy that he was determined that measures of coercion should not form the whole of his policy, and announced that the Bill for facilitating the sale of encumbered estates would be again introduced, that a measure for the amendment of the grand jury laws would be submitted to Parliament, and that the relation of landowners and tenants would be made the subject of legislation.

If we look back to what has happened in Ireland . . . we shall find that the relations of tenant and landlord have been for upwards of ninety years a source of bitterness and alienation, and of many of those violent outrages which have at different times been visited with the severest penalties of legislation; but these relations have never been placed in that position in which landlord and tenant could act with that confidence and kindness towards each other which in their situation are so peculiarly requisite. This question arose ninety years ago, and was one of the difficulties in the way of legislation before many of those agitated questions, such as the Catholic disabilities and tithes, which have now been settled, gave any trouble; and it is therefore with apprehension, as well as with hope, that I approach its consideration.

And this promise was fulfilled. The Encumbered Estates Act was passed in 1848, and a measure giving the tenant compensation for his improvements was introduced. The stubborn resistance, however, of interested parties and the critical condition of Ireland interfered with its passage. It was referred to a Select Committee, and its principle was not adopted by the Legislature for another twenty years. Its introduction chiefly proves that on this subject, as on so

many other matters, its author was a generation before his time.

In the meanwhile during this short autumn session, in which Parliament was summoned to consider the affairs of the City and forced to deal with the concerns of Ireland, attention was suddenly directed to a different subject.

Soon after assuming office in 1846 Lord John had seriously considered the state of the Church and the desirability of increasing the episcopate.[1] Writing to the Primate on the 9th of December, he said—

Regarding the great increase of population since the Reformation, and the heavy burden of duties which presses upon some of the bishops, the Queen's Ministers are of opinion that four new bishoprics ought to be founded. One of these would be Manchester; another might comprehend Nottinghamshire and part of Yorkshire; a third, by a better division of dioceses, might relieve the Bishops of London and Norwich of some parts of their labours; the fourth would probably comprehend Cornwall.

I should not, however, wish to proceed further with these plans without the assistance of episcopal authority. It will be my endeavour, therefore, to persuade your Grace, the Archbishop of York, and the Bishop of London, being all Privy Councillors, to consult with the Lord Chancellor, the President of the Council, the Home Secretary, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and myself on the scheme to be proposed to Parliament.

In a supplemental letter the next day he added—

In my letter of yesterday I omitted two points of considerable importance. The first is that my proposition would not extend to four new seats in the House of Lords for the four new bishops. . . .

The other point, to which the attention of the Cabinet has been directed, is the failure of the present Act in providing for each of the bishops the sum allotted by the commissioners.

It would require much consideration to effect a change in this respect, preserving to each of the bishops the control of his separate estates.

I need scarcely say that the proposal to make four new bishops would open for reconsideration the revenue allotted to the richer bishoprics by the existing Act.

[1] On October 30 Lady John wrote in her diary, 'Walked with John. He told me his plan of increasing the number of bishops.'

The scheme fell through, possibly from the reluctance of the bishops to reduce the income of the richer sees; but in the session of 1847 a minor arrangement was made by Parliament for the creation of a new see at Manchester, and it became necessary for Lord John to take steps for filling up his first English bishopric.[1] He at once decided on considering the claims of Dr. Hampden, whom Lord Melbourne had made Regius Professor of Divinity. Dr. Hampden's previous appointment had made some ferment. The Hebdomadal Board at Oxford had passed a statute, which was only rendered inoperative by the veto of the proctors, declaring that they had no confidence in his opinions, and that they could not allow him to judge the qualifications of the select preacher at St. Mary's. In 1842, however, when the Hebdomadal Board was reconstructed, without retracting its previous opinion, it elected Dr. Hampden to its chair. Lord John, in 1847, was impressed with the progress which Tractarian opinions were making at Oxford, and with the secession of Mr. Newman to the Church of Rome. He determined on meeting the High Church movement by selecting bishops of broad and comprehensive opinions, and he consulted the Primate (Dr. Howley) on the propriety of Dr. Hampden's appointment. The Primate replied that during the ten years in which Dr. Hampden had held the Regius Professorship he had no reason to believe that he had taught from the chair any doctrine at variance with the Articles of the Church, and that he had discovered nothing objectionable in those of Dr. Hampden's publications which he had seen and which were ably written. He added that he had no means of judging of Dr. Hampden's discretion, or of his talents for business, and that these qualifications might be more than ordinarily required in the first bishop of such a place as Manchester.

Armed with such a letter, Lord John naturally thought that no strong objection existed to Dr. Hampden's appointment; but before it took place the death of Vernon, Archbishop of

[1] The only other bishops he had previously made were Dr. Short, whom he had translated to St. Asaph from Sodor and Man; and Drs. Shirley and Eden, who were appointed to the see of Sodor and Man in 1846 and 1847 respectively.

York, created another vacancy on the bench. Lord John at once offered the vacant archbishopric to his old friend Dr. Maltby, for whom he had obtained the bishopric of Durham in 1836. Dr. Maltby, however, thought he was too old to enter upon new and arduous duties, and in his stead Lord John promoted to the archbishopric Dr. Musgrave, the Bishop of Hereford. With two bishoprics thus opened to him he appointed Dr. Hampden to Hereford, and Dr. Prince Lee, who had served under Dr. Arnold at Rugby, and who had since been head-master of King Edward's School at Birmingham, to the see of Manchester.

An unfortunate charge, which was ultimately disproved in a court of law, was at once raised against Dr. Lee by a private individual. But the opposition to Dr. Lee was drowned in the clamour which greeted the news of Dr. Hampden's promotion. The Archbishop of Canterbury wrote—

Private] Addington: November 26, 1847.

My dear Lord,—When I last saw your Lordship in Whitehall Place I observed that the promotion of Dr. Hampden might probably cause some expression of feeling. *Explosion*, I think, was the term I used; but I had then no conception of the degree of excitement which it would occasion. From what has now come to my knowledge I collect that a majority of the clergy of all degrees, whatever the difference may be on other points, concur in strong condemnation of this appointment. It is needless to say that if I had anticipated so decided a movement I should have expressed my apprehensions in much stronger terms to your Lordship. As matters now stand all I can do is to apprise you of the extent and intensity of the feeling, which seems likely to spread, more especially as I learn that regular measures will be taken to oppose the confirmation of the bishop elect.—I remain, &c.,

W. CANTUAR.

Lord John replied—

Private] Chesham Place: November 27, 1847.

My dear Lord,—The first communication I had with your Grace on the subject of Dr. Hampden was in the summer, when I thought of recommending him to the Queen for the see of Manchester. Your letter stated in substance that nothing in his writings, since he was appointed Divinity Professor, appeared to you objectionable, but

threw out some doubts as to his judgment and discretion. I have the letter, but I have not referred to it lately.

I did not recommend Dr. Hampden for the see of Manchester, but when Hereford was likely to become vacant I told your Grace that I had named Dr. Hampden to the Queen as the new bishop. You made no objection, but said it would cause a great outcry. I am sorry to find from your Grace's letter that the outcry has been greater than you expected. I must attribute it chiefly to that portion of the clergy who share Mr. Newman's opinions, but have not had the honesty to follow Mr. Newman in his change of profession.

I confess I am not surprised that such persons should dread to see a man on the Bench who will actively maintain Protestant doctrines. So long as a bishop is silent and winks at their attempts to give a Roman Catholic character to the Church of England they are not alarmed; but when they see a man promoted who has learning to detect and energy to denounce their errors they begin to fear that confessions, and rosaries, and articles taken in a non-natural sense, and monkish legends of saints, will be discouraged and exposed.

I am very sorry that Dr. Hampden, in some of his writings, has expressed himself in a confused manner, and has given his enemies a handle to say that he attacks the doctrines of the Church when he is only answering the abuse of dialectics and Greek philosophy in their application to religion by the early framers of creeds.

The person I hear is most fitted to succeed Dr. Hampden[1] is Mr. Jacobson.[2] If your Grace should know of any fitter candidate I should be glad to hear from you.—I remain, &c.,

J. RUSSELL.

The Archbishop replied on the 29th that he believed that a good many of the clergy opposed to Tractarian principles would be found among the remonstrants, that there was a general disposition to call meetings for the purpose of remonstrating, and that he understood that several of the bishops intended to make a representation to Lord John on the subject. He suggested that Dr. Hampden would be wise to make some public declaration of his firm belief in the doctrines of the Church, and appeal as proof to the lectures which he had delivered as divinity professor, and his sermons published and preached since his appointment to the professorship.

The formal announcement of the appointment created the

[1] *I.e.* as Regius Professor. [2] Afterwards Bishop of Chester.

clamour which the Primate had anticipated. Thirteen bishops, or more than one-half of the whole Bench, denounced it in the following memorial :—

My Lord,—We, the undersigned bishops of the Church of England, feel it our duty to represent to your Lordship, as head of her Majesty's Government, the apprehension and alarm which have been excited in the minds of the clergy by the rumoured nomination to the see of Hereford of Dr. Hampden, in the soundness of whose doctrines the University of Oxford has by a solemn decree affirmed its want of confidence. We are persuaded that your Lordship does not know how deep and general a feeling prevails on this subject ; and we consider ourselves to be acting only in the discharge of our bounden duty both to the Crown and the Church, when we respectfully but earnestly express to your Lordship our conviction that, if this appointment be completed, there is the greatest danger both of the interruption of the peace of the Church and of the disturbance of that confidence which it is most desirable that the clergy and laity of the Church should feel in every exercise of the Royal supremacy, especially as regards this very delicate and important particular, the nomination to vacant sees.

We have the honour to be, my Lord, with sincere respect, your Lordship's very obedient and faithful servants,

C. J. LONDON.
C. R. WINTON.
J. LINCOLN.
C. BANGOR.
A. CARLISLE.
G. ROCHESTER.
R. BATH & WELLS.
J. K. GLOUCESTER & BRISTOL.
H. EXETER.
E. SARUM.
A. T. CICESTR.
T. ELY.
S. OXON.[1]

Lord John replied as follows :—

[1] It is worth observing that twelve out of these thirteen bishops were appointed by Conservative or Tory Ministers. Of the thirteen other English prelates one see (York) was vacant. Nine of the twelve others were appointed by Whig Ministers. The exceptions on either side being Denison, Bishop of Salisbury; and Howley, Archbishop of Canterbury, Sumner, Bishop of Chester, and Copleston, Bishop of Llandaff.

Chesham Place: December 8, 1847.

My Lords,—I have had the honour to receive a representation signed by your Lordships on the subject of the nomination of Dr. Hampden to the see of Hereford.

I observe that your Lordships do not state any want of confidence on your part in the soundness of Dr. Hampden's doctrines. Your Lordships refer me to a decree of the University of Oxford passed eleven years ago, and founded on lectures delivered fifteen years ago.

Since the date of that decree Dr. Hampden has acted as Regius Professor of Divinity in the University of Oxford; and many bishops, as I am told, have required certificates of attendance on his lectures before they have proceeded to ordain candidates who had received their education at Oxford. He has likewise preached sermons for which he has been honoured with the approbation of several prelates of our Church.

Several months before I named Dr. Hampden to the Queen for the see of Hereford, I signified my intention to the Archbishop of Canterbury, and did not receive from him any discouragement.

In these circumstances it appears to me that should I withdraw my recommendation from Dr. Hampden, which has been sanctioned by the Queen, I should virtually assent to the doctrine that a decree of the University of Oxford is a perpetual bar of exclusion against a clergyman of eminent learning and unimpeachable life, and that in fact the supremacy, which is now by law vested in the Crown, is to be transferred to a majority of the members of one of our Universities.

Nor should it be forgotten that many of the most prominent among that majority have since joined the communion of the see of Rome.

I deeply regret the feeling which is said to be common among the clergy on this subject. But I cannot sacrifice the reputation of Dr. Hampden, the rights of the Crown, and what I believe to be the true interests of the Church, to a feeling which I believe to be founded on misapprehension and fomented by prejudice.

At the same time I thank your Lordships for an interposition which I believe to be intended for the public benefit.—I have, &c.,

J. RUSSELL.

Sir J. Arnould has said that this communication 'of all the celebrated letters of its celebrated writer is perhaps the neatest, the most telling, and the most incisive.' But, excellent as the letter was, it did not stop the agitation. The Bishops of Exeter and Oxford returned separately to the

charge; the Dean of Hereford declined to give his purely formal vote for Dr. Hampden's election;[1] and an application was ultimately made to the Court of Queen's Bench for a mandamus to compel the Archbishop of Canterbury to hear objections to Dr. Hampden's consecration.

These difficulties all ultimately disappeared. The Chapter of Hereford, more sensible than the Dean, obeyed the orders which they had no power to disregard, and elected Dr. Hampden. The Court of Queen's Bench, equally divided in opinion, refused the mandamus which it was required to grant; and men gradually forgot the controversy or acquiesced in the inevitable. Six weeks later, moreover, Lord John disarmed opposition by a much more important appointment. The Archbishop of Canterbury died on February 10; and Lord John at once decided on raising the Bishop of Chester to the Primacy of the Church. To Chester he promoted Dr. Graham, the Dean of Ely.

Both in the appointment which was so generally attacked, as well as in that which was so universally approved, Lord John acted on the highest motives and for what he honestly believed to be the good of the Church. It was, indeed, in allusion to Lord John's high motives that Lord Melbourne made the characteristic remark, 'Nobody ever did anything very foolish except from some strong principle.' And perhaps a man whose principles had been less pure, whose opinions had been less strong, or whose courage had been less firm, would have avoided the controversy which he almost deliberately encountered. For the sake of making an appointment which, rightly or wrongly, he thought would tend to make the Church more comprehensive, he had risked his own popularity and shaken his own position.

[1] Lord John acknowledged the Dean's intimation of his intention in the following laconic note:—

Sir,—I have had the honour to receive your letter of the 22nd inst., in which you intimate to me your intention of violating the law.—I have, &c.,

J. RUSSELL.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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